Coptic Texts Relating to Daily Life



Maher Ahmed Eissa




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Coptic Texts
Relating to Daily Life

Maher Ahmed Eissa

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Preface

This book is an abbreviated development of my M.A. thesis 'Coptic Texts Relating to Daily Life' (Cairo University, 2004). It consists of editions of Coptic texts relating to daily life.

I am indebted to many people for their help and encouragement, most importantly, my M.A. supervisors; I cannot be grateful enough to have Prof. Dr. M.A. Nur El-Din, Prof. Dr. Adel Farid and Dr. J. van der Vliet as my supervisors. There are no words possible to express my deep gratitude to Prof. Dr. M.A. Nur El-Din who honored me by supervising my M. A. thesis and who supported me with his advice, without which my work would not have been written in this shape.

I am grateful to Prof. Dr. M. A. Nur El-Din and Prof. Dr. Adel Farid for their help, encouragement and continuous efforts in my studies. I am grateful to Dr. van der Vliet for his efforts and his valuable advice and assistance during my stay in the Netherlands.

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I would also like to thank Prof. Dr. Borghouts, Head of the Egyptology Department at the Leiden University, for his help.

I am grateful to Dr. Nico Kruit of the Papyrology Institute in Leiden for helping me with Greek texts. I am also grateful to Dr. Ch. Headrick for helping me to read some words using infrared rays.

I also wish to express my gratitude to my friends and colleagues who showed lots of support during the hard times, especially all members of the Faculty of Archaeology, Cairo University, and Fayoum University, all members of the Netherlands Flemish institute in Cairo and all members of the Egyptology Department of Leiden University.

Finally, I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my family for their continuous moral and financial support. Without their encouragement, this task would have never been achieved. There are no words possible to express my gratitude to my wife Inge Warga for her help, encouragement and correcting my English.

Chapter I

Manuscript No. 3530

Papyrus No. 3530
(*Plates I, II, III*)

Manuscript. No.	3530, Coptic Museum,[1] Old Cairo, Egypt
Material	Papyrus (dark yellow); it has some small lacunae in the middle and on the right side; the papyrus is not complete, we lost a part from the right side
Dialect	Sahidic with some inconsistencies in spelling
Dimensions	From the right 6.2 x 18 cm. From the left 6.9 x 18 cm.
Provenance	Unknown. The Museum purchased it from the Giza dealer[2] Kamal Abd-Allah in 1937[3]
Date	8th century; no date is mentioned in the text, but we can suggest the 8th century from the palaeography of its script[4]
Script	Regular and large; the scribe used to make many ligatures, especially with the letter ⲉ; the handwriting seems to be very rapid as the letters are large, but the scribe was certainly educated and well familiar with the rules for writing Coptic letters
Contents	Private letter[5]

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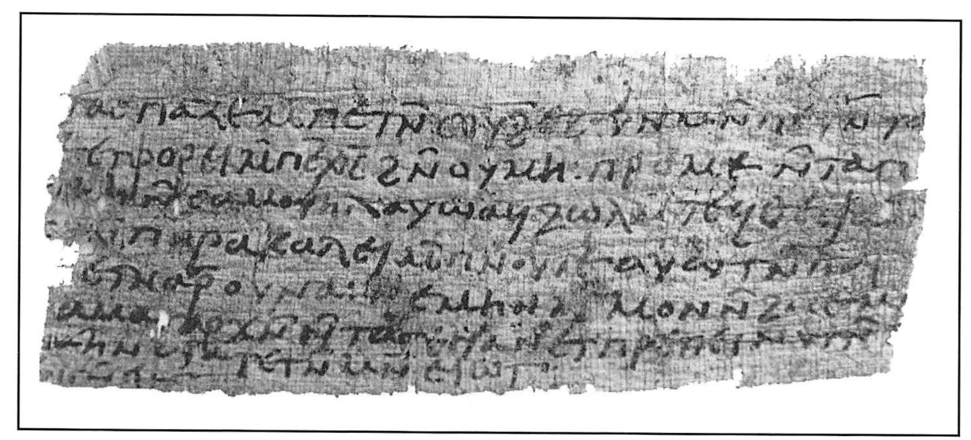
1 The Coptic Museum has been established in 1910 by Morcos Simaika Pasha, the Coptic notable. The first buildings were established on land belonging to the Coptic Patriarchate, in the time of Patriarch Cyril V. The place where the Museum stands is very important from an historical perspective, and is intimately connected with the beginning of Christianity in Egypt. It is situated within the walls of the Roman fortress of Babylon, the most famous and largest of the remains of the Roman empire in Egypt, perhaps built by the emperor Trajan at the beginning of the second century. The Coptic Museum remained the property of the Coptic Patriarchate until 1931, when the Egyptian government took it. See 30-29 ،دليل المتحف القبطي

2 The dealers from whom the papyri were purchased were recorded in the special register. They are the Cairo dealer Isaac Megala, (No's. 3084-5, sold in 1933; 3470-3471, sold in 1937), Nashid el-Mamakh (3086-3089 in 1933), Nashid Gindy el-Malelekh (3338 in 1935), and the Giza dealer Kamel Abdalla (No's. 3487-3548, sold in 1937); the Upper Egyptian dealers were sheikh Mahmoud from Behnasa (nos. 3368 and 3373-3430 in 1937) and sheikh Mohammed from Maghagha (No's. 3431-3469; 3472-3486 and 3549-3553, all sold in 1937).

3 According to the Coptic Museum registers.

4 V. Stegemann, *Koptische Paläographie* (Heidelberg, 1936), 11-12.

5 It should be noted that private letters have contributed significantly to our understanding of the hi - tory of the Egyptian language, perhaps more than any other type of document; they reflect the living colloquial language as it evolved. It should also be noted that letters are usually the most numerous category in any collection.



Papyrus No. 3530

Text

Recto

1)¨] ϯⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲉ ⲙⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲥⲟⲩ͡ϩ ⲉϩⲟⲩⲛ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̂ⲧⲁ [

2) ⲡ]ⲉⲧⲫⲟⲣⲉⲓ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉ̄ⲭⲥ̄ ϩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲙⲏ · ⲡⲣⲟⲙⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁ ⲡ[

3) .]. . ⲏ̣ⲛ̂ⲥⲁⲙⲟⲩⲏⲗ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲁϥϩⲱⲗ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉϥⲑⲉⲥⲓⲁ . [

4) ϫ]ⲉ ⲧⲛ̄ ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲁⲗⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲁⲩⲱ

ⲧ͡ⲛⲡⲁⲣ[ⲁⲕⲁⲗⲉⲓ

5)]ⲧⲉⲧⲛⲁⲣ̄ⲟⲩⲛⲁ · ⲛⲉⲙⲏⲛ ⲙ̄ⲙⲟⲛ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲥⲉ ⲙⲛ̣ [

6) ϩⲁⲙⲁ ⲅⲁⲣ ϫⲛⲛ ⲧⲁⲧⲉⲥⲓ̈ⲁ ⲛⲉⲧⲡⲣⲉⲡⲉⲓ ⲛⲏ̣ⲧⲛ̂ [

7)]ⲙⲏⲛ ϣⲁ ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲙⲛ̄ⲉⲓⲱⲧ

8)]ⲉ ⲙⲙⲁⲩ

Verso

1) † ⲧⲁⲁⲥ ⲙⲡⲛ̄ⲙⲉⲣⲓⲧ[

2) ⲡⲣⲟ̣ⲙⲉ̣ [

Apparatus

1) ⲥ·ⲱⲟⲩϩ 7. ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲙⲛ̄·ⲧ·ⲉⲓⲱⲧ

Translation

Recto

1) I greet your congregation and your [
2) Who is truly bearing Christ. The man whom [
3)] Samuel and he brought his offering [
4) We ask God and we ask [you
5) that] you will have mercy upon us. Since, we are suffering with [
6) : for at the same time, since my offering these suitable for you [
7) to your fatherhood [
8) to that place (there) [

Verso

Give it to our beloved
The man [

Commentary

L. 1

ϯⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲉ ⲙⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲥⲟⲩ̅ϩ̅ ⲉϩⲟⲩⲛ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̂ⲧⲁ

This line is a greeting formula beginning with *ϯⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲉ*.[6]

ϯ The compound pronoun is used only in present and future tenses; the other tenses use the suffix pronoun.[7] This sentence is in the first present. The principal use of this tense is to express present time in narrative,[8] and usually describes action, activity, or progress at the time of speaking.[9] The first present is also used in oaths.[10] In questions, it is introduced by an interrogative, but very often occurs without an introductory interrogative, the context alone indicating

6 A. Biedenkopf-Ziehner, *Untersuchungen zum Koptischen Briefformular unter Berücksichtigung Ägyptischer und Griechischer Parallelen* (Würzburg, 1983), 100-104.

7 G. Sobhy, *Coptic Grammar* (Cairo, 1969), 17.

8 J.M. Plumley, *An Introductory to Coptic Grammar*, 85.

9 T.O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Sahidic Coptic*, 71.

10 C.C.Walters, *An elementary Coptic Grammar*, 29.

a question, which would be expressed vocally by tone of voice.[11] The first present is negated with ⲛ before the subject pronoun and ⲁⲛ after the verb.[12] It should be noted that the infinitives ⲃⲱⲕ and ⲉⲓ are not used in the first present.

ⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲉ: ἀσπάζομαι is a Greek verb which means 'to welcome kindly, to greet'.[13] It has many ways of writing in Coptic texts, such as:

ⲁⲡⲍⲉ, ⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍ, ⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲉ, ⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲉⲁ, ⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲓ, ⲁⲥⲡⲁⲥⲉ, ⲁⲥⲡⲁⲥⲓ, ⲁⲥⲁϫⲉ, ⲁⲥⲡⲉ, ⲁⲥⲡⲍⲉ 'to greet or to kiss'.[14] The Coptic equivalent is ⲟⲩⲱϣⲧ.[15] It is well known as a greeting formula in Coptic letters.[16] This formula was used when a letter was sent to an important or higher person.[17]

It should be known that many Coptic verbs come from the Greek language. All of these Graeco-Coptic verbs are immutable, occurring only in the absolute state of the Coptic infinitive. They have no stative form. Direct objects are mediated by a preposition.[18]

The forms of greeting formulas in the Coptic letters:

The greeting formulas are usually written at the beginning of the letter.[19] It should be mentioned at this point that the beginning of Coptic letters is divided into three sections:

a) *Greeting formulas*[20]. Most Coptic letters begin with these formulas.

The greeting formulas are divided into four sections:

1) ϣⲓⲛⲉ[21]

2)ⲟⲩϣⲧ [22]

11 Martin Plumley, *An Introductory to Coptic Grammar*, 86.

12 Lambdin, *Introduction to Sahidic Coptic*, 71.

13 H.G. Liddell & R. Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 258.

14 H. Förster, *Wörterbuch der Griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen Texten* (Berlin, 2002), 116.

15 Crum, *Dict.*, 504.

16 Biedenkopf-Ziehner, *Untersuchungen zum Koptischen Briefformular*, 79.

17 Biedenkopf-Ziehner, *Untersuchungen zum Koptischen Briefformular*, 102.

18 B. Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 155.

19 Biedenkopf-Ziehner, *Untersuchungen zum Koptischen Briefformular*, 79.

20 Biedenkopf-Ziehner, *Untersuchungen zum Koptischen Briefformular*, 79.

21 Biedenkopf-Ziehner, *Untersuchungen zum Koptischen Briefformular*, 84.

22 Biedenkopf-Ziehner, *Untersuchungen zum Koptischen Briefformular*, 91.

3) ⲡⲣⲟⲥⲕⲩⲛⲉⲓ[23]

4) ⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲉ[24]

The greeting formulas 3) ⲡⲣⲟⲥⲕⲩⲛⲉⲓ and 4) ⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲉ are characteristic for Middle Egypt.[25] Some times the greeting ⲡⲣⲟⲥⲕⲩⲛⲉⲓ is abbreviated to ⲡⲣⲟⲥⲕ.[26] It should be noted that we very rarely have a greeting called 'peace greeting', ϯⲣⲏⲛⲏ.[27]

About the fourth greeting, ⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲉ, it can be said that it was written directly at the beginning of the letter or sometimes at the end of the letter followed by the ending formula, and it comes with a compound pronoun specific for the first person. The formula ⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲉ appeared in the 6th century.[28]

b) *Introductory formulas*: usually 'In the name of God'.

Such as:

ϯ ϩⲙ̄ ⲡⲣⲁⲛ ⲉⲡⲛⲟⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ϣⲟⲣⲡ ⲙⲙⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ϩⲱⲃ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲧⲉϣⲓⲛⲉ

ϯ In the name of God, first of all I inquire.[29]

Or: ⲥⲩⲛⲑ(ⲉ)ⲱ ϩⲙⲡⲛⲁ ⲛⲡⲟⲩⲧⲉ

With God ('s help): by the mercy of God.[30]

c) *Directly the subject of the letter.* The letter begins without any opening formulas. This usually occurs when the letter is written by a person of higher rank.

Such as:

ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲛⲉⲛⲧⲁⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ ⲙⲛ̄ⲧϫⲟⲉⲓⲥ

23 Biedenkopf-Ziehner, *Untersuchungen zum Koptischen Briefformular,* 94.

24 Biedenkopf-Ziehner, *Untersuchungen zum Koptischen Briefformular,* 100.

25 L.S.B. MacCoull, 'Coptic documentary papyri from Aphrodito in the Chester Beaty Library', *BASP* 22 (1985) 198.

26 W.E. Crum, *Catalogue of the Coptic manuscripts in the collection of the John Rylands Library* (Manchester, 1909), 158.

27 T.S. Richter, 'Weitere Beobachtungen am Koptischen Kambyses-Roman', *Enchoria* 24 (1997/1998), 61.

28 Biedenkopf-Ziehner, *Untersuchungen zum Koptischen Briefformular,* 100-103.

29 W.H.Worrell, *Coptic texts in the University of Michigan collection* (Michigan, 1942), 201.

30 Crum, *Catalogue of the Coptic manuscripts,* 126.

Regarding the (things) of your lord.[31]

Very rarely, the address is Netherland at the beginning of the letter.

Such as:

† ⲧⲁⲁⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲩⲗⲁⲃⲉⲥⲧ ⲛⲉⲓⲱⲧ ⲁⲡⲁ ⲉⲗⲓⲥⲁⲓⲟⲥ ⲡⲣⲉⲥⲃ ϩⲓⲧⲛ ⲅⲉⲇⲉⲱⲛ

† 'Give it to the most reverend father Apa Elisha the Priest

From Gideon'.[32]

ⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ: the scribe wrote this word incorrect ⲥⲟⲩϩ.

ⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ^SAA2F I intr, be gathered, collected II intr, to gather, to collect.[33] Sometimes it is written as ⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ.[34]

It comes with many prepositions such as:

ⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ ⲉ (collect at), ⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ ⲉϫⲛ (gather to), ⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ ⲙⲛ (meet with), ⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ ⲛ (gather at), ⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ ϩⲛ, ϩⲓ (gather at, for).[35]

And with the following adverb: ⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ ⲉϩⲟⲩⲛ (gather together), ⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ ⲉϩⲟⲩⲛ ⲙⲛ (foregather with).[36] And ⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ ⲧⲏⲣϥ (whole, congregation).[37]

In this text it may be better to take ⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ as a noun: ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ ⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ (your congregation). There is another example for this expression, which is translated, as a noun:

ϯⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲉ ⲛ̄ⲡⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ ⲉϩⲟⲩⲛ ⲧⲏⲣϥ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲁⲃ.

'I greet your entire holy congregation'.[38]

The whole sentence is a very polite form (according to the greeting formula and the word ⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ), so this letter might have been sent to a Bishop or some

31 W.E. Crum & H.G. Evelyn White, *The monastery of Epiphanius at Thebes* II (New York, 1973), 39.

32 Worrell, *Coptic texts in the University of Michigan collection*, 228-29.

33 Crum, *Dict.*, 372b.

34 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I,150.

35 Crum, *Dict.*, 373a.

36 Crum, *Dict.*, 373.

37 Crum, *Coptic Manuscripts brought from the Fayyum* (London, 1893), 23.

38 H. Satzinger and P.J. Sijpesteijn, 'Zwei Koptische Papyri aus der Papyrussammlung der Princeton University', *Enchoria* 16 (1988), 53.

other person of high rank in the church (probably the abbot of a monastery). This will become clear in the second sentence.

L. 2

ⲡⲉⲧⲫⲟⲣⲉⲓ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲭ︦ⲥ︦ ϩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲙⲏ · ⲡⲣⲟⲙⲉ ⲛⲧⲁ ⲡ [

In this sentence we can see that the scribe made some mistakes: he put the letter ⲏ instead of the letter ⲉ in the word ⲟⲩⲙⲉ,[39] (this occurred many times with these two letters),[40] and the letter ⲟ is written instead of the letter ⲱ in the word ⲣⲱⲙⲉ$_x$,[41] and in ⲫⲱⲣⲉⲓ.[42] The vowels are well known to replace each other.[43]

ⲉⲧⲫⲟⲣⲉⲓ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲭ︦ⲥ︦ : this is a very familiar formula in Coptic letters and was used after the greeting formulas.

Such as:

ⲡⲣⲟⲥⲕⲩⲛⲏ ⲁⲩⲱ ϯⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲉ ⲉⲧⲫⲟⲣⲉⲓ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲭ︦ⲥ︦ ϩⲛ̄ ⲟⲩⲙⲉ ⲡⲉⲥⲉⲛⲧⲉ ⲡⲉⲡⲓⲥⲕⲟⲡⲟⲥ ⲙⲛⲗⲁⲁⲩ.[44]

In non-literary texts ⲟ = ⲱ, and this occurs frequently in all dialects.[45] Also ⲱ= ⲟ in non-literary texts. This is common in all districts, but in early literary texts this is comparatively rare.[46] But it should be noted that the normal construct form of ⲣⲱⲙⲉ in Sahidic.[47]

ⲣⲱⲙ: this word is used in many forms like cities, citizens, and workers.

Such as:

ⲣⲱⲙ-ϫⲏⲙⲉ (S), the man of Djeme;

ⲧ-ⲣⲱⲙ-ⲧⲃⲱ (S), the lady of Edfu;

39 Crum, *Dict.*, 156b.

40 N. Bosson, 'Du Fayoum á Axoum', *Études Coptes* V, (1993), 119.

41 Crum, *Dict.*, 292b.

42 Biedenkopf-Ziehner, *Koptische Ostraka*, Band I (Wiesbaden, 2000), 183.

43 W.C. Till, *Koptische Dialektgrammatik* (München, 1961), 8-10.

44 W.E. Crum, *Short texts from Coptic ostraca and papyri* (Oxford, 1921), 44.

45 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 90.

46 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 82.

47 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 181.

ⲣⲱⲙ-ϩⲧⲟ (S), horseman.[48]

ⲣⲱⲙⲏ (S), translation of Arabic name (رومية).[49]

And also the word ⲣⲟⲙ; is used in some various words.

Such as:

ⲧ-ⲣⲟⲙ-ⲁⲧⲣⲓⲡⲉ (o), the lady of Atripe.[50]

This line completes the first line as a polite form of greeting.

Such as:

ϯⲡⲣⲟⲥⲕⲩⲛⲏ ⲁⲩⲱ ϯⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲉ ⲡⲁⲉⲓⲱⲧ ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲁⲃ ⲉⲧⲫⲟⲣⲉⲓ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲭ̅ⲥ̅ ϩⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲙⲉ ⲡⲉⲥⲉⲛⲧⲉ ⲡⲉⲡⲓⲥⲕⲟⲡⲟⲥ ⲙⲛⲗⲁⲁⲩ.[51]

ⲉⲧⲫⲟⲣⲉⲓ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲭ̅ⲥ̅$_x$ this is a very familiar form in Coptic letters; sometimes it is mentioned with a proper name or the word ⲣⲱⲙⲉ (ⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲉⲧⲫⲟⲣⲉⲓ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲭ̅ⲥ̅).[52]

ⲡⲉⲭ̅ⲥ̅: the words ⲡⲉⲭ̅ⲥ̅, ⲭⲥ or ⲭ̅ⲣ̅ⲥ̅[53] are the most common abbreviations for 'Christ' in Coptic religious and magical texts (the definite article ⲡ or ⲡⲉ, followed by the first and the final letters of the name ⲭⲣⲓⲥⲧⲟⲥ, and the superalinear stroke as abbreviation mark).[54]

This is the normal way[55] of marking abbreviated writings of some Biblical names and words of sacred importance within Christianity. Such abbreviations, made by omission of letters from the middle of a morph, are called 'compendia' or 'suspensions'.[56] But it should be noted that ⲭ̅ⲣ̅ⲥ̅ is the most well known abbreviation in Fayoumic dialect.[57] Sometimes these abbreviations are used without

48 Werner Vycichl, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue Copte* (Leuven, 1983), 173.

49 Gertrud Bauer, *Athanasius von Qūs Qilādat at-tahrir ficilm at-tafsir* (Freiburg, 1972), 166.

50 Vycichl, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue Copte*, 173.

51 Crum, *Short texts from coptic ostraca and papyri*, 44.

52 Biedenkopf-Ziehner, *Koptische Ostraka* II, 274.

53 We should be careful about the last two abbreviations, because they are sometimes used as abbreviation for another word ⲭⲣⲏⲥⲧⲟⲥ 'excellent; see: Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 34.

54 Gideon Bohak, 'Greek, Coptic, and Jewish Magic in the Cairo Genizah', *BASP* 36 (1999), 35.

55 We have two different ways to interpret the supralinear stroke in Graeco-Coptic morphs: occasionally to mark non-Greek names, and to represent n at the end of a line in a manuscript. See: Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 34.

56 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 34.

57 Martin Andersen, Bente Holmen and John Tait, 'Palaeographical and Codicological Notes to Supplement Erichsen's Edition of the Copenhagen Fayumic Manuscript of Agathonicus: P. Carlsberg 300',

the supralinear stroke, ⲬⲤ such as: ⲈⲒⲤ ⲐⲈⲞⲤ ⲞⲂⲎⲐⲰⲚ ⲠⲈⲦⲢⲞⲤ ⲒⲤ ⲬⲤ.[58] Some scribes made a mistake by writing this abbreviation ⲒⲤ ⲬⲨ.[59]

L. 3

ⲚⲤⲀⲘⲞⲨⲎⲖ ⲀⲨⲰ ⲀϥϨⲰⲖ ⲘⲦⲈϥ ⲐⲈⲤⲒⲀ/

ⲚⲤⲀⲘⲞⲨⲎⲖ is a Biblical name,[60] having ways of other writing such as: ⲤⲰⲘⲞⲨⲎⲖ,[61] ⲤⲀⲘⲞⲨⲎⲖⲒⲞⲤ,[62] and the feminine form ⲦⲤⲀⲘⲞⲨⲎⲖ.[63] When Christianity was introduced in Egypt, a great many Greek names were adopted and an even greater number of Biblical ones. Most of the ancient Egyptian names disappeared.[64]

At this point it should be noted that when the church of Egypt was separated from the church of Byzantium, after the council of Chalcedon (451 CE), the Copts returned to their old Egyptian names,[65] and the number of Greek ones diminished.[66]

Proper nouns are a very large class, typically used to call one particular person, nation, place, topographical feature, time of day, month, deity, etc. by a distinguishing name.[67] We can classify proper names in Egypt into the following classes:[68]

Enchoria 25 (1999), 8; Hans-Martin Sckenke, Bemerkungen zum P. Hamb. Bil. 1 und zum altfayumischen Dialekt der Koptischen Sprache, *Enchoria* 18 (1991), 87.

58 R.H. Monika, 'Coptic inscriptions in Egyptian collections (some notes on recent publications)', *JJP* XXIX (1999), 21.

59 H. Munier, *Les Stèles Coptes du Monastère de Saint-Siméon á Assouan* (Milano, 1931), 271.

60 G. Heuser, *Die Personennamen der Kopten* (Leipzig, 1929), 107.

61 W. Beltz, 'Die Koptischen Zaubertexte der Papyrus-Sammlung der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin: Register', *Archiv Pap.* 32 (1986), 64.

62 Heuser, *Die Personennamen der Kopten*, 108.

63 Heuser, *Die Personennamen der Kopten*, 109.

64 G.P.G. Sobhy, 'Studies in the Coptic proper names', *AE* I (1925), 42.

65 Names are like fashions. There are groups, which are in vogue for one generation and then disappear, only to reappear some time afterwards.

66 Sobhy, *AE* I, 42.

67 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 97.

68 In our days we can divide these names into different groups:

a) Purely Egyptian names still in common use, such as Pakhome (ⲠⲀϧⲰⲘ); Bishay (ⲠϢⲀⲒ); Mena (ⲘⲎⲚⲀ); Shenudah (ϢⲈⲚⲞⲨⲦⲈ); and Besenda (ⲠⲈⲤⲈⲚⲦⲈ).

b) Old Greek names, such as Butros (Peter), Bulos (Paul), Iskander (Alexander) and Giurgius (George).

c) Purely Arabic names, which may be either translations of old Egyptian or Coptic ones, or of Arabic

1) Theophoric names, those being named after a deity. The natives have adopted names of deities at times when they were most fervent about their faith.[69] By doing this they changed our conception of numerous doctrines.[70] It should be noted that the old Egyptian theophoric names survive into the fourth century.[71]
2) Geographical names, those relating to the property of the bearer or the place of birth. These names give us some information about the situation and boundaries of extinct towns and villages and thus help to study ancient geography.[72]
3) Purely qualitative or adjectival names that denote a quality or some sort of virtue, most often non-existent, or a particular characteristic of the person, usually exaggerated.
4) Complex names.
5) Obscure names, the origin and the sense of which is not known.[73]

The identification of the individual names is sometimes expressed by a construction of general relationship, apposition, and expansion by ϫⲉ- etc.[74] When Christianity was introduced in Egypt many Greek names were adopted, a number of Biblical ones[75], Samuel being one of these Biblical names. It might be supposed that personal names offer an approach to identifying those who thought of themselves as Greeks or Egyptians.[76]

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origin. They may be theophoric names, always containing the name of Allah, such as: Abdallah, Gudallah, Attallah, etc. or denoting the attributes of the Almighty, such as: Aziz, Latif etc., which are abbreviations of Abdel Aziz and Abdel Latif. (It should be noted that the Copts have been very careful not to use the name of the prophet Mohammed, or any of the derivatives of the word).

d) Mixture of Turkish and Arabic names, such as Sobhy, Turkish for Sâbih in Arabic, and Fahmy, Turkish for Fahim.

e) European names added to Arabic, or to Turkish, or even to ancient names of an Egyptian origin, such as William, Edward and Lily. See: Sobhy, *AE* I, 44.

69 Heuser, *Die Personennamen der Kopten*, 60-66.

70 Sobhy, *AE* I, 41.

71 R.S. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (Princeton, 1993), 233.

72 Sobhy, *AE* I, 41.

73 Sobhy, *AE* I, 41.

74 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 97.

75 Sobhy, *AE* I, 42.

76 Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 232.

Proper noun lexemes occuring in written or spoken texts are made up to date in three ways:

1) Most names of persons, and many other proper nouns, normally enter into the syntax uniting with an article; they are self-actualizing. E.g. ϣⲉⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ masc. 'Shenoute', ⲓⲏⲥⲟⲩⲥ masc. 'Jesus', ⲙⲁⲣⲓⲁ fem. 'Mary, or Maryam', ⲕⲏⲙⲉ masc. 'Egypt'.
2) Many topographical names and a few other proper nouns are always actualized by either ⲡ- or ⲧ-, expressing grammatical gender. E.g. ⲧϩⲓⲉⲣⲟⲩⲥⲁⲗⲏⲙ 'Jersalem'.
3) Graeco-Coptic names of pagan deities and a few names fluctuate between actualization by ⲡ-/ⲧ- and self-actualization. E.g. ⲡⲍⲉⲩⲥ and ⲍⲉⲩⲥ 'Zeus'.[77]

Finally, Coptic personal names are various, being partly taken over from pre-Coptic Egyptian and from Greek, Arabic etc., and partly created out of the current Coptic word stock.

ⲑⲉⲥⲓⲁ: θύσία: a Greek word which means 'offering, sacrifice'.[78] In Coptic ⲑⲩⲥⲓⲁ,[79] it is well known that *ê* is expressed by ⲩ,[80] and ⲩ = ⲉ. This is found in late literary texts and there are some examples in Greek words as well.[81] Hans Förster did not mention this form in his book 'Greek words in Coptic texts'.[82] We also have another form for this word in line 6, ⲧⲉⲥⲓⲁ. It is common in Coptic texts to find ⲧ = ⲑ.[83]

L. 4

ⲉ ⲧⲛ̄ ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲁⲗⲉⲓ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲧⲛ̄ ⲡⲁⲣ|ⲁⲕⲁⲗⲉⲓ ⲡⲁⲣⲕⲁⲗⲉ: παρακαλέω, Greek verb, which means 'ask for'.[84] This verb is very widespread in Coptic texts, therefore, it has many ways of writing and abbreviations.

77 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 98.

78 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 812.

79 Lothar Störk, 'Das siebenfältige Blut', *Enchoria* 23 (1996), 84.

80 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 56.

81 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 72.

82 Förster, *Wörterbuch der Griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen Texten*, 341.

83 Crum, *Dict.*, 389a.

84 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 1311.

Such as:

ⲡⲁⲕⲁⲗⲉⲓ. ⲡⲁⲗⲁⲅⲁⲗⲉ. ⲡⲁⲗⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓ. ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕ'. ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲁⲗⲉⲓⲥⲑⲁⲓ. ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲗ. ⲡⲉⲣⲕⲁⲗⲉⲓ.[85]

Greek verbs appear in the active imperative, a form identical to the infinitive form minus the final ιν or σθαυ (ⲥⲩⲛⲁⲅⲉ. συηάγειν). Some Greek verbs present in Coptic strange forms due to phonetic spelling (ⲭⲣⲱ, χρῆσθαι).[86]

ⲚⲞⲨⲦⲈ:[87] God (the God of the Bible, invariable with ⲡ-, ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ).[88] This term is very well known in proper names (like ⲡⲁⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ 'belonging to God',[89] ϣⲉⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ 'son of God')[90], and place-names (like ϫⲉⲙⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ).[91] Personal names occur in various forms, being partly taken over from pre-Coptic Egyptian and from Greek, Arabic, etc., and they are partly created out of current Coptic word stock. Compounds often contain the pre-Coptic components masc. ⲡⲁ- 'he belonging to...', ⲡⲁⲧⲉ- 'he given by...', ⲡϣⲉⲛ- 'the son of...', with the corresponding feminine form with initial ⲧ (and ϫⲉⲛ- for ⲧϣⲉⲛ-); some other kinds of names contain a component resembling the def. sing. article as their first component: ⲠⲈⲢⲎⲦ 'Perēt' male (ⲉⲣⲏⲧ masc. 'promise'); ⲧⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ 'Tagapē' female (ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ fem. 'love').[92] ⲚⲞⲨⲦⲈ has many writings, especially regarding the vowel letters ⲟ ⲩ, and sometimes it was written ⲛⲟⲩϯ (ⲫϯ ʙ).[93] In some early texts ϯ is sometimes found for ⲧ-ⲉⲓ.[94]

L.5

ϯⲧⲉⲧⲛⲁⲣ̄ ⲟⲩⲛⲁ: ⲛⲉⲙⲏⲛ ⲙⲙⲟⲛ ⲛϩⲟⲥⲉ ⲙⲛ |

ⲧⲉⲧⲛⲁ: for ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄-+ ⲛⲁ- (you will),[95] ⲧⲉⲧⲛ- 2nd plur. Personal prefixes

85 Förster, *Wörterbuch der Griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen Texten*, 615.

86 Plumley, *An Introductory Coptic Grammar*, 77.

87 In Middle Egyptian Dialect the word ⲚⲞⲨⲦⲈ is abbreviated to ⲡⲛ̄ϯ. See: Hans-Martin Schenke, 'Ein Breif als Textzeug für den Mittel Agypten Dialekt des Koptisches', *JCS* I (1990), 64.

88 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 98.

89 Heuser, *Die Personennamen der Kopten*, 24.

90 Heuser, *Die Personennamen der Kopten*, 32.

91 Crum, *Dict.*, 230-31.

92 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 97.

93 Hans Quecke, 'Die Schreibung des ou in Koptischen Handschriften', *Archiv* XXII (1974), 279.

94 Kahle, *Bala'izah I*, 149.

95 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 66.

have the durative sentence;[96] ⲛⲁ- is the particle of the first future.[97] The personal prefixes have special combinations with the future auxiliary ⲛⲁ-:

2nd sing. fem.: ⲧⲉⲛⲁ-, vars. ⲧⲉⲣⲛⲁ- and ⲧⲉⲣⲁ-, 'you are going to…'

2nd plur.: ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄, var. ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲁ-, 'you are going to…'.[98]

ⲣ ⲟⲩⲛⲁ: ⲣ̄- (complete ⲉⲓⲣⲉ)[99] simply is the infinitive 'to do, have, make'.[100] It is combined with other verbs to make compound verbs – Coptic is able to form a very great number of compound verbs – which are closely joined combinations of verb and noun forming a lexically fixed expression[101], so ⲣ̄ ⲟⲩⲛⲁ is the compound 'have a mercy, do charity, do kindness'.[102] . ⲣ̄- (ⲉⲓⲣⲉ) is one of the most well-known principal verbs[103] used in forming compound verbs.[104]

ⲟⲩⲛⲁ: this is an abbreviation of the Greek word πνεῦμα (spirit).[105] In Coptic it is common to abbreviate it to ⲡⲛ̄ⲁ̄ (ⲡⲛⲉⲩⲙⲁ).[106] It has many writings and abbreviations in Coptic like ⲡⲉⲛⲁⲩⲟⲙⲁ, ⲡⲛ̄, ⲡⲛⲁ, ⲡⲛⲁⲙⲁ, ⲡⲛ̄ⲁⲙⲁⲧⲟⲥ, ⲡⲛⲁ,[107] and derivatives, E.g. ⲡⲛⲓⲕⲟ̄ⲛ (ⲡⲛⲉⲩⲙⲁⲧⲓⲕⲟⲛ) ⲥⲡⲓⲣⲓⲧⲩⲁⲗ, ⲡⲛ̄ⲁ̄ⲧⲟⲫⲟⲣⲟⲥ (ⲡⲛⲉⲩⲙⲁⲧⲟⲫⲟⲣⲟⲥ) inspired.[108]

It should be noted that it is not important to put the supralinear stroke above the abbreviated word, because this word is used as a part of compound verb. We did not find ⲡ, but ⲟⲩ in the beginning of the word just to make a difference between aword as noun and as part of a compound verb.

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96 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 65.

97 W. Till, *Koptische Dialektgrammatik* (München, 1931), 121.

98 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 244.

99 Plumley, *An Introductory Grammar*, 70.

100 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 514.

101 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 139.

102 Crum, *Dict.*, 217a.

103 Also like: ⲉϣ or ϣ 'to be able', ϣⲡ̄ (ϣⲱⲡ) 'to receive', ϣⲣ̄ⲡ- (ϣⲱⲣⲡ) 'to do first', ϩⲓ- (ϩⲓⲟⲩⲉ) 'to strike', ϭⲛ̄- (ϭⲓⲛⲉ) 'to find', ϯ- (ϯ) 'to give' (especially in active sense), ⲟⲩϣⲉ- (ⲟⲩⲱϣ) 'to wish', ⲟⲩⲉϩ- (ⲟⲩⲱϩ) 'to set', ϥⲓ- (ϥⲓ) 'to carry, bear', ϫⲓ- (ϫⲓ) 'to talk' (especially in a passive sense).

104 Plumley, *An Introductory Grammar*, 77.

105 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 1424.

106 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 34.

107 Förster, *Wörterbuch der Griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen Texten*, 657.

108 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 34.

Or simply the scribe made a mistake by adding ⲟⲩ to the Coptic verb ⲛⲁ (have pity, mercy),[109] and ⲣ̄-ⲛⲁ (to do charity),[110] and maybe ⲣ-ⲟⲩⲛⲁ became a known compound verb. There is another example:

† ⲓⲥ ⲭⲥ ⲁⲣⲓ ⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲙⲛ ⲓⲱⲏⲁⲛⲉⲥ

† Jesus Christ have mercy with Johannes.[111]

It seems that the compound verb ⲣ̄ ⲟⲩⲛⲁ links with the preposition ⲛⲉⲙ.[112]

ⲛⲉⲙⲏⲛ: preposition ⲛ̄-, ⲙ̄ⲙⲟ⸗ + suffix pronoun 1st plur. ⲛ.[113] Some compound verbs like ⲣ̄-ⲟⲩⲛⲁ are transitive; they can be further expanded by an object which is mediated by a preposition, varying from one verb to another.[114]

ⲙⲙⲟⲛ: it means 'truly, verily, for';[115] the sentence usually began with it. ⲙⲙⲟⲛ which means 'no' (answering questions).[116]

ⲛϩⲟⲥⲉ ⲙⲛ: first present tense[117] (compound pronoun 1st. plur. ⲛ- 'ⲧⲛ̄' + infinitive ϩⲟⲥⲉ 'ϩⲓⲥⲉ')

ⲛ- = ⲧⲛ̄-: there is a considerable number of examples where ⲧ is omitted.[118]

The verb ϩⲟⲥⲉ comes with some prepositions like ⲙⲛ in order to have the meaning 'suffer, be troubled, be difficult with'.[119]

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109 Crum, *Dict.*, p. 216b.

110 A. Shisha-Halevy, *Coptic Grammatical Chrestomathy: A course for A cademic and Private Study OLA* 30 (Leuven, 1988), 229.

111 M.Cramer, *Koptische Inschriften im Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum zu Berlin* (Le Caire, 1949), 55.

112 T. Mina, 'Deux Steles Funeraires Coptes en Dialecte Bohairique', *BSAC* 5 (1939), 82.

113 Lambdin, *Introduction to Sahidic Coptic*, 31.

114 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 140.

115 Crum, *Dict.*, 169a.

116 Crum, *Dict.*,168a.

117 The first present usually describes action, activity, or a process in progress at the time of speaking. It is therefore equivalent to the English progressive present (am weeping, am writing, etc.). The first present is negated with ⲛ before the subject pronoun and ⲁⲛ after the verb.

118 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 129.

119 Crum, *Dict.*, 711a.

L. 6

ϩⲓⲁⲙⲁ ⲅⲁⲣ ϫⲛ̄ⲛ ⲧⲁⲧⲉⲥⲓⲁ ⲛⲉⲧⲡⲣⲉⲡⲉⲓ ⲛⲩⲧⲛ [ϩⲁⲙⲁ: ἅμα Greek adverb which means 'at the same time, most of the time'.[120] In Coptic there are two writings, ϩⲁⲙⲁ and ⲁⲙⲁ;[121] used as adverbial circumstantial they have the same meaning, 'at the same time'.[122] The ambiguous logical relationship of the adverbial circumstantial is resolved by a premodifying conjunction.[123]

Actually, it may be suggested that this word may be ⲡⲁⲙⲁ 'the place'[124] but after discussing with some scholars,[125] we concluded it will be more logical to be ϩⲁⲙⲁ before the preposition ϪⲒⲚ which has meanings belonging to time.

ⲅⲁⲣ: γὰρ Greek conjunction used alone or with other particles, which means 'for, because' when introducing the reason or cause of what precedes,[126] so it is called causal-explicative or clause-connecting particle.[127] In Coptic texts there are two writings, ⲅⲁⲣ or ⲕⲁⲣ.[128] These always come in positive statements, and usually come as the second element in the sentence especially with particles.[129] It should be noted that conjunctions are morphs that signal of one element to another; they also express a particular circumstance or relationship of linked items.[130]

ⲡⲣⲉⲡⲉⲓ: πρέπω Greek verb which means 'suitable or fit'.[131] There is only one way of writing in Coptic texts (ⲡⲣⲉⲡⲉⲓ).[132]

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120 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 75.

121 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen Texten*, 35.

122 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 402.

123 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 339.

124 Crum, *Dict.*, 153a.

125 Prof. Dr. J. van der Vliet, Prof. Dr. Nur el-Din and Joost Hagn.

126 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 338.

127 Shisha-Halevy, *Coptic Grammatical Chrestomathy*, 203

128 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen Texten*, 145.

129 L. Stern, *Koptische Grammatik* (Leipzig, 1880), 396.

130 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 177.

131 F. Preisigke, *Wörterbuch der Griechischen Papyrusurkunden mit Einschluss der Griechischen Inschriften, Aufschriften*, Ostraka, Mumienschilder USW. Aus Aegypten II (Berlin, 1925), 357; E.A. Barber, *Greek-English Lexicon: a supplement* (Oxford, 1968), 124.

132 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen Texten*, 671.

L. 7

ⲙⲏⲛ ϣⲁ ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ ⲙⲛ ·ⲧ· ⲉⲓⲱⲧ

The scribe wrote ⲙ̄ⲛⲉⲓⲱⲧ. This is not standard writing and the right way of writing is ⲙ̄ⲛⲧⲉⲓⲱⲧ. But there are a considerable number of examples where 't' is omitted in ⲙⲛⲧ; usually the nominal prefix ⲙⲛⲧ-, but it also occurs in the construct of the numeral 10 ⲙⲛⲧ-.[133] ⲙⲛⲧ-, fem., denotes abstractions. It combines rather widely with common nouns, some specifiers, other nominal bases,[134] and adjectives.[135] Such as: ⲙ̄ⲛⲧ-ⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ 'divinity', ⲙ̄ⲛⲧ-ⲛⲟϭ 'greatness', and ⲙ̄ⲛⲧ-ⲣⲙ̄ⲛ-ⲕⲏⲙⲉ 'Coptic language'.

The word ⲙⲏⲛ may be ⲁⲙⲏⲛ, which means 'truly'[136].

L. 8

ⲉⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲩ

The word ⲙⲁⲩ in ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲩ [ⲙ̄ⲙⲉⲩ] means 'there', ⲉⲧⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲩ 'that', and ⲉⲙⲁⲩ 'to that place, there'[137]. After that we find a small stroke called filler, used to indicate the end of the letter.

Verso

ⲧⲁⲁⲥ ⲙⲡⲛ̄ ⲙⲉⲣⲓⲧ[[138]

ⲡⲣⲱⲙⲉ[

This is the address of the recipient. It is the current form of address, always put on the verso of the papyrus.[139] It seems this is the typical Coptic address. The address simply contains the name and the title of the recipient, and the name and title of the sender.[140] ⲧⲁⲁⲥ N-NN- ϩⲓⲧⲛ-NN. It should be noted that this

133 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, p. 129.

134 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 87.

135 Crum, *Dict.*, 176.

136 I. Gardner, *Coptic theological papyri* II, 45.

137 R. Smith, *A concise Coptic-English Lexicon* (Michigan, 1983), 22.

138 L.S.B. MacCoull, *BSAC* XXIV (1979-1980), 3.

139 Biedenkopf-Ziehner, *Untersuchungen zum koptischen Briefformular*, 18.

140 The address on letters, when present do not usually indicate the location of the addressee; there was no general postal system as in modern times.

formula came from Demotic *r.dj=s n NN*.[141] Most of the time the sender reduces his titles and focuses on the titles of the recipient, a very polite manner of writing letters.[142]

Such as:

ⲦⲀⲀⲤ ⲘⲠⲀⲘⲈⲢⲒⲦ ⲚⲈⲒⲰⲦ ⲈⲦⲦⲀⲈⲒⲎ ⲠⲚⲞϬ ⲚⲢⲰⲘⲈ ϨⲒⲦⲚ ⲦⲀⲢⲒⲚⲞⲤ ⲠⲒⲈⲖ'

Give it to my dear, honored father the great man, from Tarinus the least.[143]

Sometimes we do not find the words **ⲦⲀⲀⲤ** or **ϨⲒⲦⲚ**,[144] the address having become a wellknown expression; the first name is the recipient and the second name is the sender. Sometimes we find the name of the sender without the name of the receiver, like **ϨⲒⲦⲎⲚ ⲠⲈⲔϬⲀⲞⲨⲞⲚ** 'from your slave'.[145] It is rare to use the particle **ϢⲀ** instead of **ⲦⲀⲀⲤ**.[146]

Generally, private letters were transmitted informally. Frequently a trusted retainer or acquaintance simply delivered the letter by hand. Sometimes replies to a letter were requested to be sent by the hand of anyone who happened to be coming in the right direction.[147] So either naming the recipient or simply telling the letter-carrier to deliver it to a particular individual indicated the address.

It should be mentioned at this point that there is no indication of the name of the writer of the letter or of that of its correspondent.[148]

The papyrus letter should be tied with a knot and then stamped. So on the right side there are no writings,[149] - to leave space for the carrier - just as on the left

141 W. Brunsch, 'Drei Koptische Ostrakonbriefe aus der Sammlung des Ägyptologischen Instituts in Heidelberg', *ZÄS* 106 (1979), 28.

142 Brunsch, *ZÄS* 106, 26.

143 Worrell, *Coptic texts in the University of Michigan collection*, 186.

144 L.S.B. MacCoull, Coptic Documentary Papyri from the Beincke Library (Yale University), Cairo, 1986, p. 47.

145 Worrell, *Coptic texts in the University of Michigan collection*, 206.

146 L.S.B. MacCoull, 'A Coptic monastic letter to Dioscorus of Aphrodito', *Enchoria* 18 (1991), 23.

147 E.F. Wente, 'Correspondence', *OEAE* I, 311.

148 M.A. Murray, 'A Coptic Ostracon', *AE* I (1927), 97.

149 E. Lüddeckens, 'Der Koptische Brief Reykjavik XI, corrigenda und Addenda', *Enchoria* 15 (1987), 33.

side the addresses are written.[150] Some papyri were found without stamp; it might be suggested that they were properly delivered, read and tied up again.[151]

ⲧⲁⲁⲥ: ⲧⲁⲁⲥ in the address formula is usually translated as 'give it', *i.e.* an imperative. However, Prof. Heinz-Josef Thissen pointed out that it should be translated with an infinitive, in accordance with the Coptic form that was normally used.[152]

Finally, this letter was sent to an important person, maybe to an *abba* in a monastery. This is indicated by the polite formulas and some special words such as: ⲥⲱⲟⲩϩ, ⲉⲧⲫⲟⲣⲉⲓ, ⲣ-ⲟⲩⲛⲁ, ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲓⲱⲧ, and also by the greeting formula ⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲉ that used to be addressed to important or higher persons.

Of course, we cannot understand the whole meaning of this letter. Firstly, the letter is not complete. Secondly, as in Coptic private letters, the text is not clear.[153] It is difficult to understand the contents of a letter in spite of the fact that its text may be complete, because the sender speaks to the recipient on specific topics that they are familiar with. Therefore the letter becomes very short and unclear.[154]

In general, Coptic letter-writing forms are a subdivision of late antique epistolography and adhere to its modes of address, opening and closing formulas, and religious elements.[155] It should be mentioned at this point that letter writing was practiced at all levels of Coptic society, and was prodigious at all periods.[156]

Also, it could be pointed out that this letter may originate from Middle Egypt, because the ⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲉ formula characterizes the Middle Egyptian dialects.[157] The dialect of this letter is Sahidic with some inconsistencies in spelling. It is well known that after the sixth-seventh century Sahidic was the principal dialect in the whole of Upper Egypt and drew from all subdialects in this area.[158]

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150 The address should be apparent to the carrier and to the recipient as well.

151 J.W.B. Barns, 'Two Coptic letters', *JEA* 45 (1959), 81.

152 T. Markiewicz, 'Five Coptic Ostraca from Deir El-Bahri', *JJP* XXIX, 1999, 80.

153 H. Satzinger and P.J. Sijpesteijn, 'Zwei Koptische Papyri aus der Papyrussammlung der Princeton University', *Enchoria* 16 (1988), 51.

154 H.-M. Schenke, 'Ein Brief als Textzeuge für den Mittelägyptischen Dialekt des Koptischen', *JCSI* (1990), 61.

155 MacCoull, *Coptic documentary papyri from the Beinecke Library*, 41.

156 MacCoull, *Coptic documentary papyri from the Beinecke Library*, 41.

157 L.S.B. MacCoull, 'Coptic documentary papyri from Aphrodito in the Chester Beaty Library', *BASP* 22 (1985), 198.

158 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 233-41.

Therefore, we can conclude that when we find a Sahidic text which is not standard Sahidic (Sahidic with some inconsistencies in spelling or some non-Sahidic influences), it can be pointed out that the place of origin of this text is non-Sahidic, since it shows the local influence of the area.

Chapter II

Manuscript No. 4057

Papyrus 4057
(Plates IV, V, VI)

Manuscript No.	4057, Coptic Museum,[159] old Cairo, Egypt
Material	Papyrus; its colors are dark brown and brittle
Dialect	Sahidic with Middle Egyptian influences
Dimensions	From the right side: 30.2 x 7.5 cm. From the left side: 30.0 x 6.1cm.
Provenance	Kom Ichkâw (Aphrodito).[160] It should be noted that this papyrus was transfered from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo on 7/8/1939.[161]
Date	6th century[162]
Script	Regular and thin, writing on Recto and Verso. The handwriting seems to be rapid and belongs to a professional scribe. The scribe of the letter is someone educated and familiar with the rules of the writing of Coptic letters.

159 The collection of the Coptic Museum is comprised of the following main categories:

a. The 'Indigenous' collection of the Museum, the greater part of which was purchased or presented by the Egyptian Museum to the Coptic Museum in 1937-38.

b. The papyri from the Qasr Ibrim excavations of 1969, 1974 and 1976.

c. Papyri from the 1986 Polish excavation at Naklon, Fayum. See: G. Robinson, 'International Photographic Archive of Greek Papyri, 1987 photography of the papyrus collection of the Coptic Museum, Cairo', *Enchoria* 15 (1987), 48.

160 There are three groups of papyri from Aphrodito, mostly Greek with a modest quantity of Coptic, that can be dated to different centuries:

1) Those from the 6th century have been published by Jean Maspero in Papyrus Grecs d'epoque Byzantine and in P. Lond. V

2) Those from the 7th century have been published by P. Sijpesteijn, The Aphrodito Papyri in the University of Michigan Papyrus Collection (p. Mich. XIII) (1977).

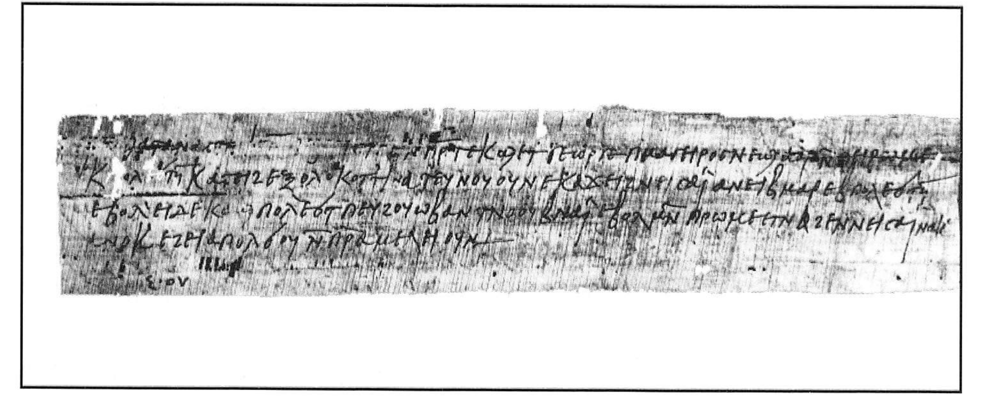
3) Those from the 8th century have appeared in P. Lond. IV.

161 According to the registers of the Coptic Museum.

162 What little information we have of the circumstances of the second Kom Ishkaw find in 1905 or the clandestine diggings in 1937 and 1938, followed by over forty years of total lack of interest, does not even now enable the researcher to track down Dioscorus's Coptic pieces. Lefebvre gave three boxes of Coptic material from the site to the Cairo Museum; however, because Jean Maspero could not read Coptic, they were put aside, and the fate of their contents is still unknown. See: L.S.B. MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito, his work and his world* (Berkeley, 1988), 20.

The hand is writing clear, evenly written, slightly inclined majuscule.

Contents Official letter. The letter is complete, but has a small lacuna in the first line.



Papyrus No. 4057

Text

Recto

1) ⳨ ϣⲁ ⲧⲁⲛⲁⲥⲧ[ⲁⲥⲓⲥ ⲛⲡⲉ]ⲭ̣[ⲣ] ⲓ̣ⲥ̣ⲧ̣ⲟ̣ⲥ̣ ⲛⲡ̄ⲣⲧⲉⲕϣⲉⲧ ⲅⲉⲱⲣⲅⲉ ⲡⲙⲁⲅⲉⲓⲣⲟⲥ ⲛⲉϣⲁⲁⲣ ⲛ̄ⲡⲉⲓⲣⲱⲙⲉ

2) ⲕⲡⲟⲗⲉϭⲧ̄ϥ̄ ⲕⲁⲧⲉⲓ ϩⲉⲝⲟⲗⲟⲕⲟⲧⲧⲓⲛⲁ ⲧⲉⲩⲛⲟⲩ ⲟⲩⲛ ⲉⲕⲁϫⲉⲓϩ ⲛⲉⲓⲝⲁï ⲁⲛⲉⲓⲃ ⲙⲁⲣⲉⲃⲡⲟⲗⲉϭⲉⲧ̄ϥ̄

3) ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲉⲓⲇⲉ ⲕⲁϣⲡⲟⲗⲉϭⲧ ⲡⲉⲩϩⲟⲩⲱⲃ ⲁⲛ ⲧⲛⲟⲟⲩⲃ ⲛⲁï ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲡⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲉⲧⲛⲁϩⲉⲛ ⲛⲉⲓⲥⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲕ

4) ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲉϩⲉⲓⲁⲡⲟⲗϭⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲡ̄ⲣⲁⲙⲉⲗⲉⲓ ⲟⲩⲛ ⳨

Verso

+ επιδοˋς Απολ Χ λωτι πρωτοˋκωμητηˋ Αφροδιηˋς παρˋα

1- ⲧⲁⲛⲁⲝⲧ[ⲁⲝ]ⲓⲝ ⲛⲡⲉ,ⲣⲓⲝⲧⲟⲝ....../ [ⲉⲱⲣⲅⲉ......./

apparatus

ⲦⲀⲚⲀⲤⲦ[ⲀⲤⲒⲤ, ⲚⲠⲈ]Ⲭ[Ⲣ] .ⲒⲤⲦⲞⲤ, ⲄⲈⲰⲢⲄⲈ

MacCoull ⲦⲀⲚⲀⲤⲦ[ⲀⲤ]ⲒⲤ, ⲚⲠⲈⲬⲒⲤⲦⲞⲤ, ϬⲈⲰⲢⲄⲈ

Verso

+ επιδ(ος) Απολ Χ λωτι πρωτοκ(ωμητη) Αφροδ(ιτης) π(αρὰ)

MacCoull ⲀⲠⲞⲖⲖⲰ ⲠⲠⲢⲰⲦⲞⲔ(ⲰⲘⲎⲦⲎⲤ) ⲀⲫⲢⲞⲆ(ⲒⲦⲎⲤ)[163]

Translation

Recto

By the resurrection of Christ, do not extort George the butcher, for the price of this man.

You will satisfy him (and) you will give 6 Soldi (golden coins). So. now, when you will receive this writing, bring him. May he come to a conclusion with him.

If you will not be able to settle their affairs (matters), send him to me with the man who will bring this writing to you.

I will satisfy them. So, do not be neglectful to them.

Verso

To be given to Apollos, πρωτοκωμήτη (head of the village) of Aphrodito from [

Commentary

W.E. Crum copied this papyrus in 1909 in the Egyptian Museum. After that Paul E. Kahle[164] and L.S. MacCoull[165] saw Crum's copies, which are kept in his

163 L.S. B. MacCoull, 'The Apa Apollos Monastery of Pharoou (Aphrodito) and its papyrus archive', *Le Muséon* 106 (1993), 24.

164 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 143.

165 MacCoull, *Le Muséon* 106, 21-63.

archives in the Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.[166] So, it should be very clear all of them did not see the original papyrus.

This papyrus belongs to the archive of Dioscorus of Aphrodito (formerly spelled Aphrodite); the Coptic portion of the archive remains unknown. Dioscorus' archive of writings, now dispersed among several papyrus collections,[167] comes from the second find at Aphrodito (Kom Ishkaw), made by G. Lefebvre[168] in 1905 after the collapse of a house-wall in the village.[169] The body of the find consisted of the private and public papers of the sixth-century owner of that house, the lawyer, poet, and monastic administrator who would become known as Dioscorus of Aphrodito.[170] The first find in 1901,[171] consisted of papyri dating from after the Arab conquest, including many Coptic pieces.[172] It should be noted that Lefebvre brought the papyri that he managed to keep from middlemen and merchants or traders to the Museum in Cairo. After this he went back to Kom Ishkaw twice more, in 1906 and 1907, and he succeeded in finding more sixth-century papyri on the site of the original find.[173]

Dioscorus (520-585 C.E.),[174] was born from hellenized Coptic gentry in Upper Egypt, and received the classical education of his time and station plus training in law and philosophy, presumably in Alexandria. He practiced law and for this activity he wrote many documents by hand in both Greek and Coptic, which are preserved. He also composed numerous Greek encomiastic poems in honor of

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166 Crum added that he knows of the Pjkôw (Kom Ishkaw) texts through the copies made by Lacau. So, we should be careful about these copies: copies of Crum's copies of Lacau's copies of untraceable originals. In several instances, the information in the Cairo papyri can be supplemented by texts of Aphrodito Coptic papyri now known only from transcriptions kept in the Crum archive in the Griffith Institute. See: MacCoull, *Le Museon* 106, 21.

167 Naturally the strata reached first were those offering Arabic, Coptic, and Byzantine Greek papyri: collectors had little interest in products of this late period, and many thousands, perhaps millions of texts must have been destroyed. See: S.E. Turner, *Greek papyri: an introduction* (Princeton, 1968), 21.

168 At that time he was the inspector of the Egyptian antiquities.

169 L.S.B. MacCoull, 'The Coptic Archive of Dioscorus of Aphrodito', *CdE* 56 (1981), 185.

170 L.S.B. MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito, his work and his world* (Berkeley, 1988), 3.

171 During the reign of Khedive Abbas Hilmy, some villagers in Kom Ishkaw were digging a well. As so often happens in Egypt when digging is done, they found not water but antiquities: in this case papyri, masses of them, the bundled tax archives of a city.

172 MacCoull, *CdE* 56, 185.

173 MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito*, 3.

174 Dioscorus flourished in the reigns of Justinian and Justin II.

dukes of the Thebaid and local officials.[175] Dioscorus was a member of a bilingual society;[176] he was a thouroughly bilingual aristocrat (with even a touch of Latin),[177] who obviously did his work and led his life in Coptic as well as in Greek,[178] which means Dioscorus spoke and wrote fluently in both languages,[179] literary as well as documentary.[180] As far as it could be told from the Greek documents he wrote, Dioscorus was a master of the late antique prose style.[181]

Dioscorus, the proud son of an elite family, was at home in a landscape of deeply rooted classical and Christian culture. This is the land of the wandering poets and of the founding fathers of the Coptic Church.[182] Dioscorus was a Coptic *dynatos*, a member of his society's most prominent and privileged group, Alexandria educated, widely traveled, and living halfway between the two districts, the Hermopolite and the Panopolite, that were headquarters of classical learning in Egypt.[183] Dioskoros (a Greek name, Διὀσχορος)[184] has some different writings in Coptic such as: ⲇⲓⲟⲥⲕⲟⲣⲟⲥ,[185] ⲇⲓⲱⲥⲕⲟⲣⲟ[186] This name was very famous from the 5th until the 7th century.[187]

It can be inferred from the dates in the archive that Dioscorus was born around C.E. 520. His father was the former protocometes (village headman)

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175 L.S.B. MacCoull, 'Dioscorus of Aphrodito', *Copt.Ency.* III, 916.

176 There are many examples of people like Dioscorus who were fluent in Coptic and Greek, and hid written products, literary as well as documentary. Such as: Patermouthis in Syene.

177 Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 245.

178 MacCoull, *CdE* 56, 186.

179 'Your Greek is always elegant and musical.
But we want all your craftsmanship now.
Our sorrow and our love move into a foreign language.
Pour your Egyptian feeling into the Greek you use'.
From the personal papers of Dioscorus. See: Traianos Gagos & Peter van Minnen, *Settling a Dispute: Toward a Legal Anthropology of Late Antique Egypt*, *Ann Arbor* (Michigan, 1994),18.

180 Richard Alston, *The city in Roman and Byzantine Egypt* (London, 2002), 317.

181 Gagos & van Minnen, *Settling a Dispute*, 19.

182 MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito*, 6.

183 MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito*, 8.

184 Heuser, *Die Personennamen der Kopten*, 79.

185 Heuser, *Die Personennamen der Kopten*, 79.

186 Heuser, *Die Personennamen der Kopten*, 787.

187 W.C. Till, *Datierung und Prosopographie der Koptischen Urkunden aus Theben* (Wien, 1962), 78.

Apollos, to become a monk later; his grandfather was another Dioscorus, and his great-grandfather Psimanobet (Coptic for 'the man from the place of geese' or 'gooseherd'). He married and fathered children. He embarked upon the sort of legal and administrative career, which was only to be expected of the scion of Aphrodito's first family.[188] Here it might be supposed that personal names offer one approach to identifying those who thought of themselves as Greeks or Egyptians.[189]

The prose writings of Dioscorus of Aphrodito come from a literary background in which skill in classical learning stamped the local writer as a recognizable member of the shared culture.[190] It should be noted that the lack of consciousness about language in both documentary and literary sources suggests that bilingualism was common in rural areas, despite the survival of considerable numbers of peasants who spoke only Egyptian.[191]

The archive of Dioscorus is a rich source of information about the cultural and economic life of late antique Egypt. In general, from the Dioscorus archive, we gain our fullest picture of life in Coptic Egypt at the time of its highest cultural flowering. However the Coptic document portions of the six-century Aphrodito archives remain largely unknown.[192]

L. 1

† ϣⲁ ⲧⲁⲛⲁ[ⲥⲧⲁⲥⲓⲥ ⲛⲡⲉⲭⲣ]ⲓⲥⲧⲟⲥ ⲛⲡ̄ⲣ̄ⲧⲉⲕϣⲉⲧ ⲅⲉⲱⲣⲅⲉ ⲡⲙⲁⲅⲉⲓⲣⲟⲥ ⲛⲉϣⲁⲁⲣ ⲛ̄ⲡⲉⲓⲣⲱⲙⲉ-

† This cross means this is the beginning of the text. Most Coptic texts begin and end with this sign and it can be noted that when the scribe of the text (letter) is Moslem, he uses the sign 'Z',[193] or the sign '//" instead of the cross sign.[194] The

188 MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito*, 9.

189 Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 232.

190 MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito*, 16.

191 Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 245.

192 L.S.B. MacCoull, 'Coptic Documentary Papyri as a Historical Source for Egyptian Christianity', *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity*, 44.

193 M. Cramer, *Koptishe Inschriften im Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum zu Berlin* (Cairo, 1949), 24.

194 Kahle, *Bala'izah* II, 593.

cross is a symbolic sign of the crucifixion.[195] Sometimes, texts are written in the shape of a cross.[196]

ϣⲁ ⲧⲁⲛⲁⲥⲧⲁⲥⲓⲥ ⲛⲡⲉⲭⲣⲓⲥⲧⲟⲥ: This is an introductory formula. It is used at the beginning of Coptic letters for a forceful opening, with an oath by the Resurrection.[197]

ⲭⲣⲓⲥⲧⲟⲥ: Christ, always takes the definite article ⲡⲉ; this word is one of the most occurring words, which the Coptic scribe used to abbreviate to ⲭ̅ⲥ̅.[198] It should be noted thatⲭⲣⲓⲥⲧⲟⲥ is one of the most occurring Greek words; in its complete form it was very familiar in the texts of Nag Hammadi.[199]

ⲛ̅ⲡ̅ⲣⲧⲉⲕϣⲉⲧ: ⲛⲡⲣⲧⲉⲕ= ⲙⲡⲣⲧⲉⲕ[200] and actually ⲙⲡⲣⲧⲉⲕ= ⲙⲡⲣⲧⲣⲉⲕ.[201] The ⲣ of the causative verbal prefix is omitted regularly.[202] ⲙ̅ⲡⲣ SAA² is a negative imperative particle,[203] and ⲥⲉⲧ is an infinitive form.[204] The negative imperatives are formed by prefix ⲙ̅ⲡⲣ- (ⲙ̅ⲡⲱⲣ-, ⲙ̅ⲡⲉⲣ-) + infinitive.[205]

ⲅⲉⲱⲣⲅⲉ: proper Coptic name, [206] sometimes written as ⲕⲉⲱⲣⲅⲉ.[207] In literary and non-literary texts we sometimes find ⲕ comes instead of ⲅ.[208] Other possible terminations in Coptic texts are ⲅⲉⲱⲣⲅ, ⲅⲉⲱⲣⲅⲓ, ⲅⲉⲱⲣⲅⲓⲟⲥ,[209] ⲅⲓⲱⲣⲅ,[210]

195 A. Basilios, 'The sign of the cross', *Copt.Ency.* II, 658.

196 P.T. Nielsen, 'An Inscribed Lime-Stone in the Bohairic Dialect', *BSAC* XXI (1975), 117.

197 MacCoull, *Le Muséon* 106, 24.

198 Till, *Koptische Grammatik*, 44.

199 F. Siegert, 'Le Vocabulaire Grec des Documents de Nag Hammadi', *Etudes Coptes* V (1993), 180.

200 Coptic literary texts in all dialects usually assimilate the preposition, genitive, object and plural particle ⲛ to ⲙ before following ⲙ, ⲡ, ϕ, ⲃ. (Stern, *Koptische Grammatik*, 41; it should be noted that many of our earliest manuscripts either do not assimilate at all or show marked inconsistencies in this (Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 98).

201 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 170.

202 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 169.

203 Crum, *Dict.*, 178b.

204 Crum, *Dict.*, 594a.

205 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 294.

206 Heuser, *Die Personennamen der Kopten*, 90.

207 S.J. Clackson, *Coptic and Greek texts relating to the Hermopolite monastery of Apa Apollo* (Oxford, 2000), 172.

208 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 94.

209 Clackson, *Coptic and Greek texts relating to the Hermopolite monastery of Apa Apollo*, 58.

210 Walter C. Till, *Die Koptischen Rechtsurkunden der Papyrussammlung der Österreichischen*

ΓΙѠΡΓΙ,[211] ΓΕΟΡ,[212] ΓΕΟΡΓ,[213] and ΚΕѠΡΓΕ.[214] It is interesting to mention that the meaning of George (Georgos) is 'Peasant'.[215]

This name is a very familiar one and it is still in use until now. MacCoull[216] and Kahle[217] read this name ϬΕѠΡΓΕ, reading this text from Crum's copies, but it should be noted that Crum himself did not make these copies but he asked one of his scholars, Lacu, who was working at that time in the Egyptian Museum, to do it for him. So, Crum, Kahle, and MacCoull are wrong because we have the original papyrus and it is for sure that this letter is Γ and not Ϭ.

It should be noted that of the Greek/Coptic personal names, those of the Greek second declension (-ΟϚ) occur not only with final -ΟϹ (ΜⲀΡΚΟϹ 'Mark') but also with final -ΟΥ (ΜⲀΡΚΟΥ 'Markou') and -Ε (ΓΕѠΡΓΕ 'Georgeh'). Some occur in a shortened form as well as in a full one: ΧⲀΗⲖ 'Khaēl', from ΜΙΧⲀΗⲖ 'Mikhaēl'; ΓⲀΒΡΙ 'Gabri', from ΓⲀΒΡΙΗⲖ 'Gabriēl'.[218]

ΜⲀΓΕΙΡΟϹ: The Greek word μάγειρος means 'butcher, slaughterer, meat-salesman, cook' (these functions being frequently combined in one person).[219] It should be noted that Hans Förster did not mention this word in his book about the Greek words in the Coptic texts.[220]

L.2

ⲔⲠⲞⲖⲈϬⲦϤ ⲔⲀⲦⲈⲒ ϨⲈⲌ ⲞⲖⲞⲔⲞⲦⲦⲒⲚⲀ ⲦⲈⲨⲚⲞⲨ ⲞⲨⲚ ⲈⲔⲀϪⲈⲒϨ ⲚⲈⲒϨ(Ϩ)ⲀⲒ ⲀⲚⲈⲒⲂ ⲘⲀⲢⲈⲂ ⲠⲞⲖⲈϬⲦϤ

Nationalbibliothek (Wien, 1958), 61.

211 Till, *Die Koptischen Rechtsurkunden der Papyrussammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek*, 46.

212 W.E. Crum, *Coptic manuscripts brought from the Fayyum* (London, 1893), 45 (pap. 25).

213 Crum, *Coptic manuscripts brought from the Fayyum*, 37 (pap. 20).

214 W.E. Crum & Georg Steindorff, *Koptische Rechtsurkunden des Achten Jahrhunderts aus Djeme (Theben)* (Leipzig, 1971), 33 (pap. 9).

215 Alan K. Bowman & Eugene Rogan, *Agriculture in Egypt from pharaonic to modern times* (Oxford, 1999), xviii.

216 MacCoull, *Le Museon* 106, 24.

217 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 95.

218 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 97.

219 Preisigke, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Papyrusurkunden mit Einschluss der griechischen Inschriften*, 45.

220 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen Texten*, ??

ⲕⲡⲟⲗⲉϭⲧϥ should be ⲕⲁⲡⲟⲗⲉϭⲧϥ, ⲕⲁ= ⲕⲛⲁ the particle of the first future.[221] In Subachmimic manuscripts and a few non-literary texts the ⲛ of the first future is sometimes omitted,[222] E.g. ϯⲁ for ϯⲛⲁ, ⲕⲁ for ⲕⲛⲁ, etc.[223] It should be noted that the same phenomenon may be observed in the relative future prefix (ⲉⲧⲁ for ⲉⲧⲛⲁ), and particularly in the second future, where this occurs frequently.[224]

ⲡⲟⲗⲉϭ, confused with ⲡⲱⲣϫ, has many meanings: vb I intr. 'be agreed, reach satisfaction, to decide'. II tr. 'to deliver, to decide, to settle an affair'.[225]

ⲕⲁⲧⲉⲓ: ⲕⲁ = ⲕⲛⲁ, the particle of the first future, as above. ⲧⲉⲓ is a Sahidic verb equal to ϯ which means 'to give, to pay' and related meanings.[226] The syllabic ϯ seems to have been devised in the Coptic period, and possibly is a monogram of ⲧ and ⲓ.[227] In some early texts ϯ is sometimes found for ⲧⲉⲓ.[228] It often appears as a definite article in early Sahidic, Achmimic and also in Old Coptic.[229]

ϩⲉⲍ ⲟⲗⲟⲕⲟⲧⲧⲓⲛⲁ: ϩⲉⲍ Greek ϛ° as numeral six.[230] ⲟⲗⲟⲕⲟⲧⲧⲓⲛⲁ is a Roman coin which has many forms in Coptic.[231] From 296 C.E.[232] Egypt was provided with a three-part currency: golden coins (aurei, or solidi - solidus:[233] standard gold coin), silver coins (argentei), and three denominations of billon coins (small amount of silver on a base of bronze).[234] It should be noted that the minting of silver soon ceased, but gold and billon coinage continued. At any

221 Till, *Koptische Grammatik*, 240.

222 Walter C. Till, 'Beiträge zu W.E. Crum, Coptic dictionary', *BSAC* XVII (1943), 205.

223 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 151-152.

224 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 151.

225 Crum, *Dict.*, 261.

226 Crum, *Dict.*, 392.

227 W.E. Crum, 'An Egyptian Text in Greek Characters', *JEA* 28 (1942), 20, note 5.

228 Sethe, *ÄZ* LXIV, 65.

229 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 122; Crum, *Dict.*, 258a.

230 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 752.

231 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen Texten*, 569-574.

232 From Augustus to Diocletian, Egypt was an isolated currency zone, supplied by the mint in Alexandria with a billon coinage unique to the province. The monetary unit was the drachma, in official reckoning equated to the sestertius, with the tetradrachm, four-drachma piece, equated to the denarius.

233 The solidus weighed about 5.45 gram; in the period of Constantine it was reduced to about 4.5 gram.

234 Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 330.

time, golden coins, which were effectively pure, could be purchased openly for billon coins.[235]

ⲧⲉⲩⲛⲟⲩ SF, ϯⲛⲟⲩ SAA²BF, 'now'.[236] It should be noted that ⲉⲩ= ⲉ and ⲟⲩ= ⲉ; this is only common at Thebes.[237]

ⲟⲩⲛ: This Greek word, οὖν, has many meanings: (a) 'really', (b) to continue a narrative: 'so', 'then' (c) in inferences: 'then', 'therefore'[238] – this last meaning 'always' in Coptic. In Coptic it had two ways of writing, ⲟⲛ and ⲟⲩⲛ.[239]

ⲉⲕⲁϫⲉⲓϩ: ⲉⲕⲁ=ⲉⲕⲛⲁ, the particle of the second future.[240] The 'n' is sometimes omitted in the second future tense, E.g. ⲉⲓⲁ for ⲉⲓⲛⲁ, ⲉⲕⲁ for ⲉⲕⲛⲁ, etc ...[241] The ⲛ is also omitted in the second perfect, the past relative and the first perfect negative.[242]

ϫⲉⲓϩ: The meaning of ϫⲉⲓϩ is simply equal to ϫⲓ. It is common to add the letter ϩ to a word,[243] such as: ϩⲁⲣⲏⲩ (= ⲁⲣⲏⲩ), 'perhaps'; ⲟⲩⲱϩ (= ⲟⲩⲱ), 'news',[244] and to verbal roots, such as: ⲫⲱⲛϩ, ϣⲱⲕ.[245]

ⲛⲉⲓϩ(ϩ)ⲁⲓ: ⲛⲉⲓ is a demonstrative pronoun[246]. ⲛⲉⲓ AF, ⲛⲁⲓ BS, but ⲉ = ⲁ in many cases in Sahidic, due to Achmimic, sub-Achmimic or Fayoumic influence.[247]

ⲥⲁⲓ = ⲥϩⲁⲓ A surprising number of examples can be cited from non-literary texts where ϩ is omitted after ⲥ in ⲥϩⲁⲓ.[248] it can be found ϩ=

235 Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 330.

236 Crum, *Dict.*, 485a.

237 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 73-74.

238 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 1271-72.

239 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen Texten*, 595.

240 Till, *Koptische Grammatik*, 240.

241 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 151.

242 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 158.

243 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 143.

244 W.H. Worrell, *Coptic Sounds* (Michigan, 1934), 109.

245 Crum, *Dict.*, 632a.

246 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 48.

247 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, p. 58.

248 This phenomenon also occurs with the word ⲥⲏⲓⲙⲉ: ⲏ is frequently omitted in this word (Crum, *Dict.*, 385); in Achmimic, Subachmimic, Fayoumic, Sahidic manuscripts and in Old Coptic hime is often found for chime (Kahle, *Bala'izah* I,128).

ⲥϩ in non-literary texts as well; on the other hand ϩⲁⲓ for ⲥϩⲁⲓ can be found.[249]

The irregular omission, addition or metathesis of the letter ϩ (in early manuscripts written S, derived from hieroglyphic h)[250] to a greater or lesser extent characterizes most of the early Coptic manuscripts, and the final standardization of the correct use of this letter can hardly have taken place long before the early years of the fourth century C.E.[251]

The main reason for this is probably the fact that the letter was verbally weak and perhaps in some districts - maybe in Middle Egypt and perhaps further south[252] - was hardly or irregularly pronounced. On the other hand, it ought to be borne in mind that when Coptic was first used by Christians, the use of additional Demotic letters was disputed at least in some circles.[253]

The well-known Cockney habit of omitting or improperly inserting the letter 'H' in English is due to a natural absence of the 'H' and an effort to correct the defect, resulting in overcorrection. Weakness or absence of the 'H' is undoubtedly a general tendency, not only in Sahidic, but also in other dialects. The misusage of the 'ϩ' in Coptic should be ascribed to the weakness of the 'ϩ', not to its redundancy in the spoken language.[254]

The question must have been raised whether, instead of employing the Demotic letter ϩ, the 'spiritus asper' used in Greek manuscripts should be taken over. This could then be omitted quite regularly on the analogy of those Greek manuscripts which were written without accents.[255]

Probably the earliest examples of Coptic used by Christians are written without any of the Demotic letters and while ϣ is represented by ⲥ, ϥ by ⲃ and ϫ by ⲭ the ϩ was naturally omitted altogether.[256]

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249 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 128.

250 Crum, *Dict.*, 631a.

251 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 139.

252 W.E. Crum, 'Some Further Meletian Documents', *JEA* 13 (1927), 21.

253 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 139.

254 Worrell, *Coptic Sounds*, 109-110.

255 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 139.

256 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 140.

ⲁⲚⲈⲒⲂ: ⲁⲚⲈⲒ, (ⲁⲚⲒ., ⲁⲚⲒ =) is an imperative verb from the infinitive ⲈⲒⲚⲈ.[257] And ⲈⲒ = Ⲓ: ⲁ considerable number of early Sahidic texts write frequently ⲈⲒ for normal Sahidic Ⲓ. This spelling is probably due to Subachmimic influence.[258] It should also be noted that in a number of early Sahidic manuscripts we frequently find Ⲓ for ⲈⲒ, and in non-literary texts this occurs in all dialects.[259]

Ⲃ = ϥ: This peculiarity is extremely common in Coptic texts.[260] W.E. Crum mentioned about ϥ: 'It is frequently replaced by Ⲃ'.[261] This occurs as below:

a) Ⲃ for ϥ in suffixes, E.g. ⲁⲚⲈⲒ / Ⲃ, and ⲦⲚⲞⲞ / Ⲃ (in the third line).

b) Ⲃ for ϥ in verbal prefixes, E.g. Ⲙⲁⲣⲉ /= Ⲃ, verbal prefixe of the optative.[262]

c) Ⲃ for ϥ in the possessive adjective ⲠⲈⲂ-, ⲦⲈⲂ-, ⲚⲈⲂ-.[263]

ⲡⲟⲗⲉϭⲧϥ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ : When the verb ⲡⲟⲗⲉϭ takes prepositions, the meaning changes a little, such as with ⲉⲃⲟⲗ SB 'reach conclusion, make an end'.[264]

L.3

ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲉⲓ ⲇⲉ ⲉⲕⲁϣⲡⲟⲗⲉϭⲧ ⲡⲉⲩϩⲟⲩⲱⲃ ⲁⲛ ⲧⲛⲟⲟⲩⲃ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲉⲧⲛⲁϩⲉⲛ ⲛⲉⲓⲥϩⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲕ

ⲉⲓ ⲇⲉ : εἰ is a Greek conjunction which means 'if' and it used to come with another Greek conjunction, δε.[265] This conjunction is equal to the Coptic conjunction ⲉⲓϣⲁⲛ.

ⲡⲉⲩϩⲟⲩⲱⲃ: ⲡⲉⲩ, possessive article. The article expresses a general, logically ambiguous relationship (related to, belonging to), exactly like the mark of relationship ⲛ-, and the possessive article consists of the definite article followed by personal intermediates.[266]

257 Till, *Koptische Grammatik Saidischer Dialekt*, 151.

258 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 78.

259 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 79-80.

260 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 136.

261 Crum, *Dict.*, 619.

262 U.-K. Plisch, *Einführung in die Koptische Sprache (Sahidischer Dialekt)* (Wiesbaden, 1999) 109.

263 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 137.

264 Crum, *Dict.*, 262a.

265 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen Texten*, 227.

266 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 46.

ϩⲟⲩⲱⲃ: Old writing for ϩⲱⲃ, which means 'matter, thing, work, event'.[267] Sometimes ⲟⲩⲱ= ⲱ.[268]

ⲉⲧⲛⲁϩⲉⲛ: ⲉⲧⲛⲁ, the relative particle of the future. When the relative pronoun is the subject of a relative clause, no further pronominal subject element is required.[269]

Then, the scribe added ϩ.[270] ⲉⲛ one of the forms of the verb ⲉⲓⲛⲉ, which means, 'to bring'.[271]

L.4

ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲉϩⲉⲓⲁ ⲡⲟⲗϭⲟⲩ ⲛⲡⲣ̄ ⲁⲙⲉⲗⲉⲓ ⲟⲩⲛ ϯ

ⲉϩⲉⲓⲁ: The scribe added ϩⲉ.[272] As was said before, ⲉⲓⲁ = ⲉⲓⲛⲁ, the particle of the future II.[273] **N** is omitted in certain verbal prefixes: ϯⲁ- = ϯⲛⲁ, ⲉⲓⲁ- = ⲉⲓⲛⲁ-, ⲉⲧⲁ- = ⲉⲧⲛⲁ-, ⲧⲁ- = ⲛⲧⲁ-, etc ...[274]

ⲛⲡⲣ̄ SAA², ⲙⲡⲉⲣ- B, ⲛ̄ⲡⲉⲣ- SBF, ⲡⲣ-, ⲡⲉⲣ- SAF, ⲙⲡⲉⲗ-, ⲡⲉⲗ-, ⲙⲃⲉⲗ- F, prefix of the negative imperative.[275] The negative imperative is formed by the prefix ⲙⲡⲣ- (or ⲙ̄ⲡ̄ⲱⲣ ⲉ-) + infinitive.[276]

ⲁⲙⲉⲗⲉⲓ: The Greek word ἀμέλει properly is the imperative of ἀμελέω, meaning 'never mind, do not trouble yourself, have no care for, be neglectful of'.[277] This verb has several forms in Coptic texts such as ⲁⲙⲉⲓ, ⲁⲙⲉⲗⲉ, ⲁⲙⲉⲗⲉⲓ, ⲁⲙⲉⲗⲏ, ⲁⲙⲉⲗⲓ.[278] ⲙ̄ⲡⲣ ⲁⲙⲉⲗⲉⲓ is a common expression in Coptic letters and in the Coptic language in general.[279]

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267 Crum, *Dict.*, 653a.

268 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 91.

269 Lambdin, *Introduction to Sahidic Coptic*, 76.

270 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 143.

271 Lambdin, *Introduction to Sahidic Coptic*, 67.

272 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, p. 143.

273 Till, *Koptische Grammatik, Saidischer Dialekt*, 240.

274 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, p. 105.

275 Crum, *Dict.*, 178b.

276 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 194.

277 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 80.

278 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen Texten*, 36.

279 Scheuke, 'Zwei Koptische Geschäftsbriefe', *JJP* XXX (2000), 153-54.

It should be noted that Greek verbs occur frequently in Coptic texts. These have a single fixed infinitive form resembling the Greek imperative and are inflected like any other Coptic verb.[280]

The verso:

☧ ἐπιδ(ος) Απολ Χ λωτι πρωτοκ(ωμητη) Αφροδ(ιη ς) π(αρα)

The Coptic form of the address is: ⲧⲁⲁⲥ ⲛ-N.N. ϩⲓⲧⲛ N.N.[281] The handwriting of the address is quite similar to that of the recto. It can be concluded that the same hand wrote the recto (Coptic) and the verso (Greek). There are many examples for this phenomenon, the body of the letter in Coptic and the address in Greek.[282] Moreover, Egypt had at least three languages in wide use in the fourth century C.E.: Egyptian (Coptic), Greek, and Latin. Given the thousands of published papyri and a society with more than one language in common use, the documents are less forthcoming with information about the relationship between these languages than might be expected.[283] In a society with three languages in use, and two of them of daily importance to large numbers, one might expect to find translating, interpreting, and quoting to be important activities.[284]

The address is completely in Greek.[285] Apparently the author was used to write Greek addresses or the carrier of the letter was used to reading them. It should be noted that Egypt at the time of this text was a bilingual society, Coptic as well as Greek.[286] The Copts mostly used Greek formulas, even though the body of documents was written completely in Coptic.[287] Therefore, it seems very natural to assume that the writer of the text was not Greek speaking but rather a native speaker of Coptic. In the case of private letters, the sender, the recipient, the place, the time and the culture at this time should be considered, and the

280 Lambdin, *Introduction to Sahidic Coptic*, 73.

281 Worrell, *Coptic texts in the University of Michigan collection*, 186.

282 H. Satzinger & P.J.Sijpesteijn, 'Zwei Koptische Papyri aus der Papyrussammlung der Princeton University', *Enchoria* 16 (1988), 50.

283 Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 231.

284 Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 233.

285 I am grateful to Dr. Nico Kruit of the Papyrological Institute in Leiden for helping me in reading this line.

286 L.S.B. MacCoull, 'The Coptic Archive of Dioscorus of Aphrodito', *CdE* 56 (1981), 186.

287 J. Doresse, 'Cryptography', *Copt. Ency.* VIII, 66.

situation of the letter. Therefore, it can be pointed out that the Greek address at this time was a familiar formula. The same occurred in the centuries after the Arabic conquest; the body of the letter was written in Coptic and the address in Arabic, simply because Arabic was the well-known culture at this time and the Arabic formulas were the familiar formulas.[288]

Due to the Greek archive of Dioscorus of Aphrodito, the address of this letter was very familiar, it was found many times such as:

- Απολλωτι πρωτο[κω]μ(ητη).[289]
-]τ[ο]ις εὐδοκιμωτ(ατοις) Αιοσκ[ορ]ω (και) Απολλω[τ]ι πρωτοκωμ(ηταις)]μενας.[290]
- [Απ]ολλωτι πρωτοκωμ(ητη) [Α]φροδ(ιτης) π(αρα) Ιωαννου.[291]
- Απολλωτι πρωτοκωμ(ητη) π(αρα) Ιωαννου.[292]
- επδ(ος) τω[α]δελφω Απολλωτι πρωτ[ο]κ[ω]μ(ητη) π(αρα) ψαιον ν[ουμερ(αριον)].[293]
- [κ]ερ[α]λωυς επτισκο[που] τω α)δελφω Απολλωτι πρωτοκ(ωμητη) απο κωμης Αφροδιτης.[294]

At this point it should be mentioned that the relationship between Greek and Coptic within Egyptian Christianity is a complex matter. However, it has become clear that Coptic contains a large amount of Greek vocabulary.[295]

Απολλωτι: This is one of the Greek names, which means 'the head of the village'. It came into Coptic (ⲁⲡⲟⲗⲗⲱ),[296] and sometimes it was transferred

288 W.E. Crum, *Catalogue of the Coptic Manuscripts in the collection of the John Rylands Library*, 176.

289 P. Cairo Masp. 1. 67055 Vo; P. Cairo Masp. 2. 67203 Vo; P. Lond. 5. 1684 Vo 7.

290 P. Cairo Masp. 1. 67060 Vo.

291 P. Cairo Masp. 1. 67073 Vo.

292 P. Cairo Masp. 2. 67292 Vo.

293 P. Cairo Masp. 3. 67323 Vo.

294 P. Cairo Masp. 3. 67326, 5.

295 Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 253.

296 Heuser, *Die Personennamen der Kopten*, 78.

within Coptic to ⲁⲡⲟ,[297] ⲁⲡⲟⲗⲗⲟⲥ,[298] ⲁⲡⲗⲱ.[299] Apollos, protokometes of Aphrodito, became a monk in C.E. 538 and founded his own monastery of the Holy Christ (later popularly referred to by his own name), just outside Aphrodito, bearing the apostles of Pharoou.[300]

'X' (the sign is also found in Coptic addresses), stands as an ornament in the space in the middle where the tape crossed,[301] and seems intended merely to fill up the space to be occupied by cord and seal.[302] This sign is found in another papyrus from the same archive of Dioscorus.[303] Sometimes the scribe put other signs like:

(ϩ ϩ). On the other hand, sometimes simply a small place is left open.[304]

πρωτοκ(ωμητη): A Greek word used as a title for the head of the village.[305] This word is also used in Coptic ⲡⲣⲱⲧⲟⲕⲱⲙⲏⲧⲟⲩ or ⲡⲣⲱⲧⲱⲕⲱⲙⲏⲧⲟⲩ, abbreviated ⲡⲣⲱⲧⲟⲕ or ⲡⲣⲱⲧⲉ.[306]

Αφροδιτης: Aphrodito (former spelled Aphrodite).[307] This is a village on the eastern bank of the Nile,[308] nowadays belonging to Timā (Sohag).[309] In the middle of the Roman Empire period and even in the Byzantine period and at the beginning of the Arab era, it was the capital of a Nome (the tenth in Upper Egypt) where the goddess *W3ḏt* (the uraeus) was worshipped in the pharaonic period. She was identified as the goddess Hathor, the Egyptian counterpart of Aphrodite in the Ptolemaic period, when, judging from the mass of papyri

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297 Heuser, *Die Personennamen der Kopten*, 96.

298 Heuser, *Die Personennamen der Kopten*, 86.

299 Heuser, *Die Personennamen der Kopten*, 87.

300 MacCoull, *Enchoria* 18, 24.

301 Worrell, *Coptic Texts in the University of Michigan collection*, 177.

302 H.I. Bell, *Greek Papyri in the British Museum* V (Oxford, 1917), 78.

303 MacCoull, *Enchoria* 18, 23.

304 Crum, *Catalogue of the Coptic Manuscripts in the collection of the John Rylands Library*, 133.

305 Preisigke, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Papyrusurkunden*, 432.

306 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen*, 703.

307 MacCoull, *CdE* 56, 185.

308 عبد الحليم نور الدين، مواقع ومتاحف الآثار المصرية، (القاهرة،2001)، 196.

309 عبد الحليم نور الدين، مواقع الآثار اليونانية الرومانية في مصر، (القاهرة،2001)، 167.

discovered there,[310] Aphrodito was a very important city. In the sixth century C.E. this Nome was swallowed up into the Nome of the right bank, which had as its capital Antaeopolis (the present Qāw al-Kabīr).[311] Perhaps Aphrodito is the best-attested community of the fifth to seventh centuries C.E.[312]

One must take care not to confuse this Aphrodito with the five or the six other cities in Egypt that bear the same name. The large number of religious buildings proves that Christianity was important in this village;[313] it is clear that the most important institution was the church.[314] It is known that in the village and its surroundings there were many churches and monasteries. It is sometimes impossible to distinguish one from another, because each is called simply topoc. There are more than thirty churches, and an even larger number of monasteries.[315] Around Aphrodito itself are the well-documented monastic sites of Bawit, Der Bala'izah, and Wadi Sarga.[316]

About the name of Kom Ichkâw, one can say that the meaning of this name is equal to Κώμη (= Kôm = 'a village', Greek word) *Wꜣḏt-ḏw-kꜣy*. The two hieroglyphic words, *Wꜣḏt*, the name of the local goddess, and *ḏw*, which means 'mountain' were similar in pronunciation. The hieroglyphic *kꜣy*, which means 'high', together with the other two words, was amalgamated and became Ichâw.[317] About the origin of the name there is another version which says that its name in Egyptian, (ⲧ) ϫⲕⲱⲟⲩ, coming apparently from ϫⲕⲟ 'to sell' which means 'Emporium' , the area market for the strategically located Antaeopolite Nome.[318]

310 It was the discovery of a quantity of papyri relating to the village that allowed scholars to form some idea of the implanting of Christianity in this region, a discovery that took place at the end of the nineteenth century C.E. and was further investigated at the beginning of the twentieth century C.E. This discovery has provided a better knowledge of the economic and social role that the Christians and their clergy were able to play before the Arab conquest of Egypt. But it should be mentioned that the information about the arrival and expansion of Christianity in this village is still lacking.

311 R.-G. Coquin, 'Aphrodito', *Copt.Ency.* 1, 153.

312 R. Alston, *The city in Roman and Byzantine Egypt* (London, 2002), 296.

313 Coquin, *Copt.Ency.* 1, 154.

314 R. Alston, *The city in Roman and Byzantine Egypt*, 316.

315 Coquin, *Copt.Ency.* 1, 153.

316 MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito*, 6.

317 H. Messiha, 'Fasc. 1 Fragments of Coptic and Greek Papyri from Kom Ichkaw', Supplément *ASAE* 29 (1983), 4.

318 MacCoull, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito*, 6.

Finally, the letter is clearly addressed to Apollos, protokometes (the head of the village) of Aphrodito, and the writer's name is not preserved in the body of the letter. Therefore the letter is of interest in forming part of the Coptic archive of Dioscorus of Aphrodito. It will be useful for compiling a history of the monastery of Apa Apollos and assessing its social role in the sixth century C.E. Christian Egyptian culture.

Chapter III

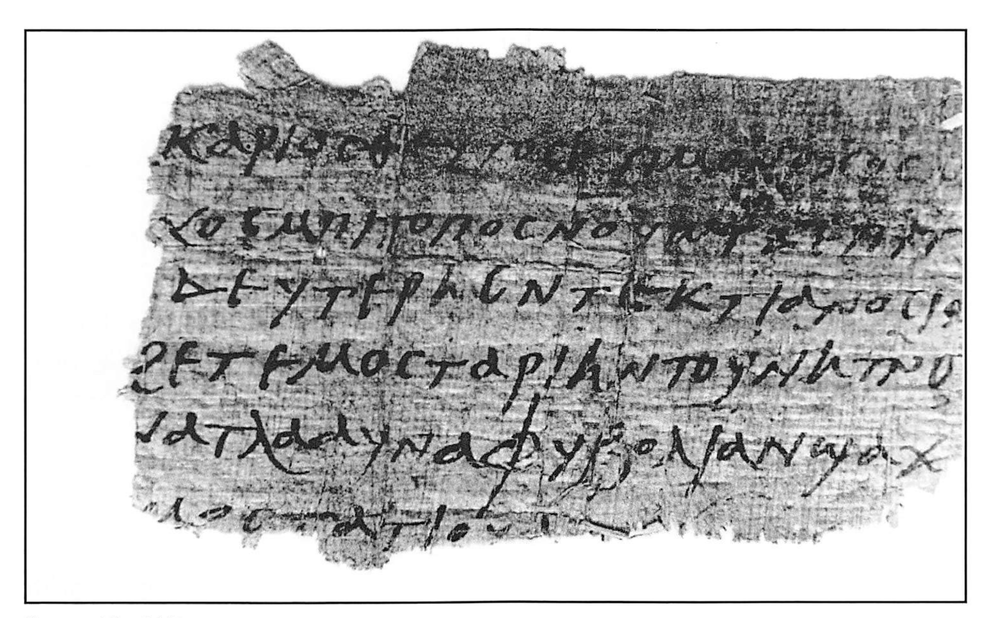
Three fragments

(A contract and two private letters)

(I) Papyrus 3418

(Plate VII)

Manuscript No.	3418, Coptic Museum, Old Cairo, Egypt
Material	Papyrus (its colour is dark yellow and it has some small holes in its edges)
Dialect	Sahidic
Dimensions	8.7 x 5.6 cm.
Provenance	Unknown. The Museum purchased it from the dealer al-Sheikh Mahmoud Ali from Al-Bahnasa, on 3/2/1935.
Date	8th–9th century C.E. No date is mentioned in the text, but the 8th–9th century can be suggested because of the palaeography of its script.[319]
Script	(its colour is dark yellow and it has some small holes in its edges)
Contents	Contract



Papyrus No. 3418

319 Stegemann, *Koptische Paläographie*, 12-13.

Text

Recto

1) ⲠⲘⲀ]ⲔⲀⲢⲒⲞⲤ ⲐⲈⲨⲦⲞⲤⲈ ⲠⲘⲞⲚⲞⲬⲞⲤ Ⲙ [
2) ⲠⲘⲞⲚⲞ]ⲬⲞⲤ ⲘⲠⲒⲦⲞⲠⲞⲤ ⲚⲞⲨⲰⲦ ϪⲈ ⲠⲒⲦ. [
3)]ⲆⲈⲨⲦⲈⲢⲎⲤ ⲚⲦⲈⲔⲒⲀⲚⲞⲤ ⲒⲀ̄
4) ⲦⲒⲞⲚ]ϨⲈⲦⲈⲘⲞⲤ ⲦⲀⲢⲒ̈ ⲎⲚⲦⲞϥ ⲚⲎⲦⲚ̄ Ϭ[ⲈⲠⲎ
5) ⲚⲀⲦⲖⲀⲀⲨ ⲚⲀⲪⲨⲂⲞⲖⲒⲀ ⲚϢⲀϪⲈ[
6) ⲦⲒⲞ ⲚϨⲈⲦⲒ]ⲘⲞⲤ ⲦⲀⲦⲒ ⲞⲨ[ⲖⲞⲔⲞⲦⲤⲒ

Translation

1) The] blessed Theutose the monk (μοναχὸς) of [
2) the] monk (μοναχὸς) of the same monastery (τοπὸς) saying:[
3) the] second (δεύτερος) indiktion year (ινδικτιών) 11 [
4) I am] ready to bring him to you quickly [
5)] without any objection of word [
6) I am] ready, to give soldi [

Commentary

This is a part of a contract. It is not certain of what the contract is speaking; it may be a contract for money. In this small part of the contract, some well-known expressions and formulas of Coptic contracts are used.

L. 1

ⲠⲘⲀ]ⲔⲀⲢⲒⲞⲤ ⲐⲈⲨⲦⲞⲤⲈ ⲠⲘⲞⲚⲞⲬⲞⲤ Ⲙ[

The first line is the beginning of the contract. Coptic contracts begin with the names of the owners of these contracts.[320] Sometimes they begin with other (beginning) expressions such as: ϨⲘⲠⲢⲀⲚ ⲘⲠⲚⲞⲨⲦⲈ ⲚϢⲞⲢⲠ,[321] or ϨⲘ ⲠⲞⲨⲰϢ ⲘⲠⲚⲞⲨⲦⲈ,[322] followed by the names.

320 Till, *Die Koptischen Rechtsurkunden der Papyrussammlung*, 60-70.

321 Crum, *Catalogue of the Coptic Manuscripts in the collection of the John Rylands library*, 73.

322 Till, *Die Koptischen Rechtsurkunden der Papyrussammlung*, 141.

ⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ: μακάριος is a Greek adjective which means 'happy'.[323] In Coptic it means 'late,[324] blessed,[325] sacred'.[326] It is used to be abbreviated to ⲙⲁ/,[327] ⲙⲁⲕ/,[328] ⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣ/.[329] It has some different ways of writing and abbreviations in Coptic texts.[330] It is also used as a proper name.[331] ⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ became a very well-known name for patriarchs such as: Macarius I,[332] Macarius II[333] and Macarius III,[334] and for saints such as: saint Macarius,[335] Macarius Alexandrinus,[336] Macarius the Egyptian[337] and Macarius of Tkow.[338]

ⲡⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ ⲑⲉⲩⲧⲟⲥⲉ: This should be the father's name of the owner of this contract, since the Coptic contracts begin with the first name, and then the second name (father's name) is written. Therefore, this line should be like the following:

+ ⲁⲛⲟⲕ (first name) ⲡϣⲏⲙ ⲡⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟⲥ ⲑⲉⲩⲧⲟⲥⲉ.

+ I (first name) the son of the late Theutose. Such as:

+ ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲡⲉⲛⲉⲩϩⲟⲟⲣ ⲡϣⲉ ⲛⲃⲓⲕⲧⲱⲣ ⲡϣⲉ ⲛⲥⲟⲩⲥⲁⲛⲛⲁ.[339]

323 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 1073.

324 Clackson, *Coptic and Greek texts*, 78.

325 Y. ʿabd Al-Masih, 'Doxologies in the Coptic Church', *BSAC* VIII (1942), 46.

326 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen*, 491.

327 Till, *Die Koptischen Rechtsurkunden der Papyrussammlung*, 79.

328 Crum & Steindorff, *Koptische Rechtsurkunden des Achten Jahrhunderts aus Djeme (Theben)*, 167 (pap. 53).

329 Till, *Datierung und Prosopographie der Koptischen Urkunden aus Theben*, 28.

330 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen*, 491.

331 Heuser, *Die Personennamen der Kopten*, 12.

332 S.Y. Labib, 'Macarius I', *Copt.Ency.* V, 1487.

333 Labib, 'Macarius II', *Copt.Ency.* V, 1487-1488.

334 M.Shoucri, 'Macarius III', *Copt.Ency.* V, 1488-1489.

335 T. Orlandi, 'Macarius, saint', *Copt.Ency.* V, 1489.

336 A.Guillaumont, 'Macarius Alexandrinus, saint', *Copt.Ency.* V, 1489-1490.

337 Guillaumont, *Copt.Ency.* V, 1491-92.

338 D.W. Johnson, 'Macarius of Tkow', *Copt.Ency.* V, 1492-1494.

339 Till, *Datierung und Prosopographie der Koptischen Urkunden aus Theben*, 42.

ⲐⲈⲨⲦⲞⲤⲈ: ⲐⲈⲞⲆⲞⲤ, Coptic proper name.[340] It has many writings such as: ⲐⲈⲞⲆⲞⲤⲒⲞⲤ,[341] ⲐⲈⲨⲆⲞⲤⲒⲞⲤ,[342] ⲐⲈⲰⲆⲰⲤⲒⲀ,[343] ⲆⲈⲞⲆⲰⲤⲒ,[344] and ⲐⲈⲞⲆⲞⲤⲒⲀ (female name),[345] and ⲐⲈⲨⲦⲰⲤⲒ.[346] It should be noted that Ⲧ = Ⲇ frequently in Greek words.[347]

ⲙⲟⲛⲟⲭⲟⲥ: μοναχός, a Greek word[348] which means 'monk'.[349] It has many ways of writing and abbreviations in Coptic texts.[350] After that the name of the monastery or place where this monk lived should be written.

L. 2

ⲠⲘⲞⲚⲞ]ⲬⲞⲤ ⲘⲠⲒⲦⲞⲠⲞⲤ ⲚⲞⲨⲰⲦ ϪⲈ ⲠⲒⲦ.[

ⲦⲞⲠⲞⲤ: τόπος, which means 'place, region, position'.[351] In Coptic texts it sometimes means 'monastery,[352] shrine,[353] church'.[354] This means it is sometimes impossible to distinguish one church from another in the same place in Coptic texts, because each is simply called ⲦⲞⲠⲞⲤ. L. Antonini, P. Barison and A. Calderini, in their Dizionario (1935-1987), enumerated more than thirty churches and an even larger number of monasteries, without counting the vague references to ⲦⲞⲠⲞⲤ.[355]

340 W. Brunsch, 'Index zu HEUSERs 'Personennamen der Kopten', *Enchoria* 12 (1984), 126; H. Satzinger, *Koptische Urkunden* III (Berlin, 1967), 346.

341 W.E. Crum, 'Koptische Zünfte und das Pfeffermonopol', *ZÄS* 60 (1925), 108.

342 W.E. Crum, *Coptic Ostraca* (London, 1902), 74, pap. 444.

343 Crum, *Coptic Ostraca*, 74, pap. 450.

344 Till, *Die Koptischen Rechtsurkunden*, 120.

345 Brunsch, *Enchoria* 12, 126.

346 Crum, *Coptic manuscripts brought from the Fayyum*, 78 (pap. Bodleian).

347 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, p. 95.

348 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 1143.

349 Someone who lives apart from the world in an all-male community, devoting himself to prayer, contemplation, and the performance of religious duties. He may prefer to live as a hermit, dwelling alone and meeting other members of his community only occasionally, in church and at mealtime in the monastery refectory. A cenobitic monk, on the other hand, lives in a cloistered community and follows a strictly organized pattern of daily life. For the main aspects of monastic life, and a monk's daily life, see: Archbishop Basilios, 'Monk', *Copt.Ency.* V, 1667-1668.

350 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen*, 531.

351 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 1806.

352 M. de Fenoyl, 'Une Inscription Funéraire Bilingue', *BSAC* XVII (1963-1964), 60-61.

353 J. Drescher, 'Apa Claudius and the thieves', *BSAC* VIII (1942), 70.

354 Coquin, 'Aphrodito', *Copt.Ency.* I, 153.

355 Coquin, 'Aphrodito', *Copt.Ency.* I, 153.

ϫⲉ: The ⲉ of ϫⲉ is often omitted when it is followed by a verbal prefix beginning with a vowel, especially in Achmimic and in non-literary texts of the late period in Sahidic.[356] Sometimes, the final ⲉ is omitted at the end of the words due to Sahidic influence.[357]

ⲉⲡⲓⲧⲏ: ἐπειδή, Greek conjunction 'after, that, when, since'.[358] In Coptic it has many ways of writing and it is used for introducing the real contents of a document.[359]

L. 3

]ⲁⲉⲩⲧⲉⲣⲏⲥ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲓⲁⲛⲟⲥ ⲓ̄ⲁ̄

It appears that this is the date of signing the contract. ⲇⲉⲩⲧⲉⲣⲏⲥ (δεύ τερος)[360] is a Greek word which means 'the second' and occurs in many forms in Coptic texts.[361]

ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲧⲓⲁⲛⲟⲥ (ινδικτιω): a Greek word, having many writings and abbreviations in Coptic.[362] The meaning is equal to the meaning of the Coptic word ⲥⲉⲡ, which means 'year in dating events, documents'.[363]

The Indiction year

In the Byzantine period a system appeared for referring to crops, taxes and years by numbered indictions. It was a system of indictions occurring in fifteen-year cycles and related to taxation.[364]

For at least 15 years, namely between 297 and 312 C.E., the Roman government issued tax-declarations annually, calling them epigraphai or indictions. These declarations were devided into five-year cycles, of which at least three occurred. In 312 the use of a regular fifteen-year cycle began, and this cycle

356 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 179.

357 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 66.

358 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 613.

359 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen*, 275.

360 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 381.

361 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen*, 167.

362 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen*, 347

363 Crum, *Dict.*, 348a.

364 R.S. Bagnall & K.A. Worp, *The Chronological systems of Byzantine Egypt* (Zutphen, 1978), 1.

length was/is used ever after. The indiction year began at a variable time in early to mid summer, declared each year by the government after the harvest. The crops that had just been harvested (at that moment) was nevertheless counted as a part of the indiction beginning after the harvest, perhaps because the taxes were collected in the new indiction.[365]

It should be noted that the cycle of 15 years for numbered indictions was first introduced in early 314 and at the time of its introduction the system was applied comprehensively to include the preceding year.[366] Maybe in the years after 350, the indiction started to be used more generally as dating.[367]

Egypt had a different indiction, which is due to the unusual chronology of its agricultural cycle, a cycle that depended principally not on the weather in Egypt but on the behaviour of the Nile. It is because of this fact that we have to interpret the 'Nile-indiction'.[368]

The indiction year started at a date which was changed, or at least changeable each year; in other words, the Egyptian indiction in contrast to the Constantinopolitan was a moveable indiction.[369]

The indiction system was used as an instrument of fiscal administration and this remained its primary function. The persons primarily interested in the system were financial officials of the government.[370]

Among the means of dating documents in Byzantine Egypt, is the use of an era calculated with year 1 = 284/5. This is the first year of the reign of the emperor Diocletian. This era is sometimes specifically identified in the texts, i.e. 'year xx of (or from) Diocletian' (it is occasionally simply given as 'year xx'). Later one may find the era called 'from the martyrs'. It is the universal statement of handbooks and manuals that a year of this era coincided with the Egyptian civil year, *i.e.*, began on Thot 1. Since the use of the era was highly specialized, it seems worthwhile to give a table of the instances of its use known to us and to discuss briefly the indictions, which can be derived from it.[371]

365 Bagnall & Worp, *The Chronological systems of Byzantine Egypt*, 1.

366 Bagnall & Worp, *The Chronological systems of Byzantine Egypt*, 6.

367 Bagnall & Worp, *The Chronological systems of Byzantine Egypt*, 21.

368 Bagnall & Worp, *The Chronological systems of Byzantine Egypt*, 27.

369 Bagnall & Worp, *The Chronological systems of Byzantine Egypt*, 17.

370 Bagnall & Worp, *The Chronological systems of Byzantine Egypt*, 17.

371 Bagnall & Worp, *The Chronological systems of Byzantine Egypt*, 43.

L. 4

ΤΙΟ Ν]ϨΕΤΕΜΟϹ ΤⲀⲢÏ ΗΝΤΟϤ ΝΗΤΝ Ϭ[ΕΠΗ

ΗΝΤΟϤ: Strange writing for 3rd masc. sing. **ΝΤΟϤ**.[372]

L. 5

ΝⲀΤⲖⲀⲀⲨ ΝⲀΜⲪⲨΒΟⲖΙⲀ ΝϢⲀϪΕ[

ΝⲀΤⲖⲀⲀⲨ ΝⲀΜⲪⲨΒΟⲖΙⲀ: This is one of the most familiar expressions in Coptic contracts.[373] It always comes in complete form such as:

ΝⲀΤΗⲀΠ ΝⲀΤΝΟΜΟϹ ΝⲀΤⲖⲀⲀⲨ ΝⲀΜⲪΒΟⲖΙⲀ.

(without judgement, without law, and without any objection).[374]

Sometimes another expression is used with the same meaning:

ΝⲀΤⲖⲀⲀⲨ ΝⲀΝΤΙⲖΟⲄΙⲀ 'without any objection'.[375] Sometimes **ΝⲀΤⲀΜⲪΙΒΟⲖΙⲀ** is translated as 'without disagreement'.[376]

ⲖⲀⲀⲨ: Indefinite pronoun which means 'anyone, anything', like **ΟⲨΟΝ**. These are used most frequently in negative contexts as 'no one, nothing'.[377]

L. 6

ΤΙΟ ΝϨΕΤΙ]ΜΟϹ ΤⲀΤΙ ΟⲨ|ⲖΚΟΤϹΙ

ΤΙΟ ΝϨΕΤΙΜΟϹ ΤⲀΤΙ: This is a very well-known expression in contract formulas,[378] meaning 'I am ready to give', after which should be mentioned to whom and the price or thing of this contract.[379] Sometimes the date of the contract is mentioned, such as:

ΤΙΟ ΝϨΕΤΟΙΜΟϹ ΤⲀΤⲀⲀⲨ ΝΗΤΝ̄ ΝΕΠΗΠ

'I am ready to give them to you in the month of Epip'.[380]

372 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 65.

373 Till, *Die Koptischen Rechtsurkunden*, 30-60.

374 Clackson, *Coptic and Greek texts*, 66; Till, *Die Koptischen Rechtsurkunden*, 70.

375 E. Stefanski & M. Lichtheim, *Coptic Ostraca from Medinet Habu* (Chicago, 1952), plate 56.

376 Worrell, *Coptic Texts in the University of Michigan collection*, 209-210.

377 Lambdin, *Introduction to Sahidic Coptic*, 62.

378 Till, *Die Koptischen Rechtsurkunden*, 90.

379 Clackson, *Coptic and Greek texts*, 213.

380 Till, *Die Koptischen Rechtsurkunden*, 90.

ΟΥΛΚΟΤCΙ: A Roman coin which has many forms in Coptic.[381] From 296 C.E. onwards, Egypt was provided with a three-part currency: golden coins (aurei, or solidi: 'solidus: a standard golden coin'[382]), silver coins (argentei), and three denominations of billon coins (a small amount of silver on a base of bronze).[383] It should be noted that the minting of silver soon ceased, but golden and billon coinage continued. At any time, golden coins, which were effectively pure, could be purchased openly for billon coinage.[384]

381 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen*, 569-574.

382 A solidus weighed about 5.45 gram; in the period of Constantine it was reduced to about 4.5 gram.

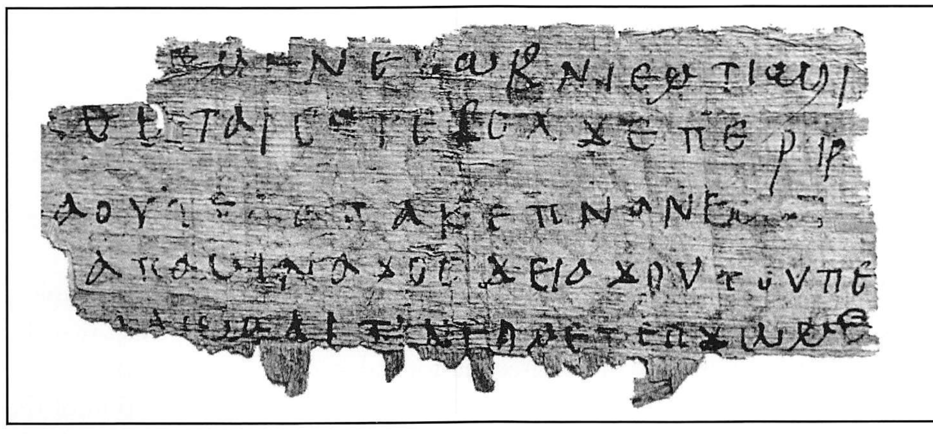
383 Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 330.

384 Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 330.

(II) Papyrus 2677

(Plate VIII)

Manuscript No.	2677, Coptic Museum, Old Cairo, Egypt
Material	Papyrus; its colour is light yellow, it has no holes but it lost a big part from the right and left side
Dialect	Sahidic with some incorrect spellings and Fayoumic influences
Dimensions	13.6 x 5.2 cm. The papyrus is in very bad condition.[385]
Provenance	Unknown
Date	From the palaeography, it can be dated to the 8^{th} –9^{th} century[386]
Script	Per folio recto 5
Content	Letter



Papyrus No. 2677

385 Most of the fragments in museums in general and in the Coptic Museum in particular are preserved in a bad condition, because first of all, in the early finds the scholars did not take care of the Coptic papyri but they only cared for the Greek and Arabic papyri. Secondly, at the beginning of Coptic papyrology, the investigators and papyrolgists were interested in complete papyri and neglected the small fragments. Thirdly, the dealers sometimes divided the papyri to small pieces to get more money. Fourthly, in the Coptic Museum, most of the manuscripts were transferred from other places (such as the Egyptian Museum and ancient churches and monasteries), and the operation of this transference sometimes destroyed the papyri (manuscripts).

386 Stegemann, *Koptische Paläographie*, 11.

Text

Recto

1) † ϩⲁⲑ]ⲏ̣ ⲙⲉⲛ ⲉϩⲱⲃ ⲛⲓⲉⲙ ϯⲓⲥϣⲓ]ⲛⲉ ⲉ
2) ⲕⲁⲧ]ⲁ̣ ⲑⲉ ⲧⲁⲓⲥⲉⲧ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ϫⲉ ⲡⲉⲣⲓⲣ[
3)]ⲕ̣ⲁ ⲟⲩϩⲉⲗⲁⲡ ⲁⲕⲉⲡⲛⲁ ⲛⲉⲙⲁ̣ⲩ
4)]ⲁⲡⲁ ⲙⲓⲛⲁ ϫⲟⲥ ϫⲉⲓⲁ ϫⲟⲩⲧⲟⲩ ⲡⲉ[
5)] . ⲁ̣ⲓⲙⲁ ⲁⲓⲧⲓ ⲛⲉ̣ϩⲙⲉⲧ ⲉⲡϫⲱⲙⲉ [

Translation

Recto

1) Before] anything I greet [
2) as] I wrote outward saying: the pig (perir) [
3)] a vessel. You had mercy with them [
4)] Apa Mena said: I will send them [
5)] I gave money according to the book [

Commentary

This is a small fragment of a letter. It cannot be told exactly what the subject of this letter is, but it appears to be a money matter. Because of the fact that the document begins with one of the greeting formulas, it can be concluded that it is a letter. Some of the words are not clear because of the bad condition of the papyrus, such as ⲧⲁⲓⲥⲉⲧ, ⲏⲉⲗⲁⲡ, ⲛⲉⲙⲁⲩ.[387] The dialect is not clear as well, but most of the letter is in Sahidic, and it has some Fayoumic influences such as ⲥⲉⲧ, ϫⲟⲩⲧ , and some incorrect spellings such as ⲛⲓⲉⲙ.

L. 1

ϩⲁⲑ]ⲏ̣ ⲙⲉⲛ ⲉϩⲱⲃ ⲛⲓⲉⲙ ϯⲓⲥϣⲓ]ⲛⲉ ⲉ: This well-known greeting formula comes at the beginning of the letter.[388] This formula was a familiar expression from the end of the 6th until the 12th century.[389]

387 I am grateful to Dr. Ch. Hedrick for helping me to read these words by using infra-red.

388 Biedenkopf-Ziehner, *Untersuchungen zum Koptischen Briefformular*, 84.

389 Biedenkopf-Ziehner, *Untersuchungen zum Koptischen Briefformular*, 87.

ⲘⲈⲚ: is a Greek particle μεν men:

ⲈϨⲰⲂ = ⲚϨⲰⲂ, Ⲛ is frequently omitted, but much more common is its substitution by Ⲉ.[390] It should be known also that commonly ϨⲰⲂ = ϨⲰϤ in non-literary texts.[391]

ⲚⲒⲈⲘ: The scribe made a mistake in this word, it should be ⲚⲒⲘ.[392] In Coptic texts there is no writing ⲚⲒⲈⲘ for ⲚⲒⲘ (there seems to be here!), but sometimes ⲚⲈⲒⲘ[393] is used, because in a number of early Sahidic manuscripts we frequently find Ⲓ for normal Sahidic ⲈⲒ. Also in non-literary texts we find the confusion of ⲈⲒ with Ⲓ where normal Sahidic has Ⲓ.[394]

In this expression some words are sometimes replaced by other words;

ⲆⲈ comes instead of ⲘⲈⲚ or ⲚⲒⲘ, like: ϨⲀⲐⲎ ⲆⲈ ⲚϨⲰⲂ ⲚⲒⲘ ϯϢⲒⲚⲈ ⲈⲢⲞⲔ, 'Before all things I greet you'.[395]

ⲠϢⲀϪⲈ comes instead of ϨⲰⲂ like: ϨⲀⲐⲎ ⲘⲈⲚ Ⲙ ⲠϢⲀϪⲈ ϯϢⲒⲚⲈ, 'Before any words I greet'.[396]

This expression ϨⲀⲐⲎ ⲘⲈⲚ ⲚϨⲰⲂ ⲚⲒⲘ sometimes comes with another greeting word (ⲠⲢⲞⲤⲔⲨⲚⲈ): ϨⲀⲐⲎ ⲘⲈⲚ ⲚϨⲰⲂ ϯ ⲠⲢⲞⲤⲔⲨⲚⲈ, 'Before everything I make obeisance'.[397]

L. 2

ⲔⲀⲦ]Ⲁ̣ ⲐⲈ ⲦⲀⲒⲤⲈⲦ ⲈⲂⲞⲖ ϪⲈ ⲠⲈⲢⲒⲢ[

ⲦⲀⲒⲤⲈⲦ: ⲦⲀ is the personal intermediate, suffixed to the conjunctive base Ⲛ⁄ (var. Ⲛ⁄ and ⲚⲈ⁄) Ⲛ̄ⲦⲀ, but also simply ⲦⲀ- (with absence of the preceeding base Ⲛ ⁄).[398]

390 Kahle, *Bala'izah* II,114.

391 Kahle, *Bala'izah* II, 93-94.

392 Crum, *Catalogue of the Coptic Manuscripts in the collection of the John Rylands Library*, 150.

393 R. Kasser, *Compléments au Dictionnaire Copte de Crum* (Le Caire, 1964), 37.

394 Kahle, *Bala'izah* II, 79.

395 Crum, *Catalogue of the Coptic Manuscripts in the collection John Rylands Library*, 127.

396 Worrell, *Coptic texts*, 173.

397 Worrell, *Coptic texts*, 192; Crum, *Catalogue of the Coptic Manuscripts in the collection John Rylands Library*, 185.

398 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 68.

ⲥⲉⲧ: is simply **ⲥϩⲁⲓ**;[399] this verb has many ways of writing: **ⲥⲉⲧ** might be the Fayoumic form or/and (?) **ⲥϩⲏⲧ** the Sahidic form. There are a lot of examples in non-literary texts where **ϩ** is omitted after **ⲥ**, especially in **ⲥϩⲁⲓ** and **ⲥϩⲓⲙⲉ**.[400] Sometimes **ⲥϩⲁⲓ** is followed by prepositions such as **ⲉⲃⲟⲗ** 'write outward, publish'.[401]

ⲣⲓⲣ: 'pig, swine'.[402] **ⲡⲉⲣⲓⲣ** can be used as the Greek name φρῆρ.[403] Here, the right translation of the word cannot be known, because the text is incomplete and because this papyrus is just a small fragment of a letter.

L. 3

]ⲕ̣ⲁ ⲟⲩϩⲉⲗⲗⲁⲡ ⲁⲕⲉⲡⲛⲁ ⲛⲉⲙⲁ̣ⲩ

ⲁⲕⲉⲡⲛⲁ: 1st perfect tense;[404] the infinitive should be **ⲣ̄ⲡⲛⲁ** 'to have mercy, pity, do charity',[405] and this is called a compound verb, closely joined combinations of verb and noun to form a lexically fixed expression.[406] Simply **ⲣ-** with noun: auxiliary, deriving verbs from nouns: 'do....', 'make...', and 'be...' (prenom. of **ⲉⲓⲣⲉ**).[407]

L. 4

]ⲁⲡⲁ ⲙⲓⲛⲁ ϫⲟⲥ ϫⲉⲓⲁ ϫⲟⲩⲧⲟⲩ ⲡⲉ[

ⲁⲡⲁ: The Coptic term *apa* is interchangeable with the Arabic *abba*, which occurs in Semitic languages, including Syriac, Aramaic and Hebrew, all meaning 'father'. This is a title of reverence usually preceeding names of persons in the church hierarchy. Historically the title is extended to the names of secular martyrs as well. It is also inspired by the opening of the Lord's Prayer, and its Latin equivalent of pater appears in the Latin Vulgate. Originally in Coptic it

399 Crum, *Dict.*, 381b.

400 Kahle, *Bala'izah* II, 128.

401 Crum, *Dict.*, 383a.

402 Crum, *Dict.*, 299a.

403 Crum, *Dict.*, 299a.

404 Till, *Koptische Grammatik*, 159.

405 Shisha-Halevy, *Coptic Grammatical Chrestomathy*, 229.

406 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 136.

407 Shisha-Halevy, *Coptic Grammatical Chrestomathy*, 209.

was: ⲁⲡⲁⲧⲏⲣ or ⲁⲡⲁ ⲡⲁⲧⲏⲣ. Sometimes it is also cited in Coptic as ⲁⲛⲃⲁ or ⲁⲙⲡⲁ, which is generally used in modern Arabic with the names of bishops, archbishops and patriarchs, such as Anba Shinudah. Derived from it is the word *abuna* meaning 'our father', which is used in addressing a priest or a monk.[408] *Abba* is apparently more ceremonious than *apa*.[409]

When *Apa* precedes an Arab name, there is a fair chance that it is not a title, but an Egyptian version of Abū, used alongside the more faithful and common transliterations αβου (ⲁⲃⲟⲩ) and ⲁⲡⲟⲩ.[410]

ⲙⲓⲛⲁ: A very well-known Coptic name,[411] having many writings, such as: ⲙⲓⲛⲁ,[412] ⲙⲉⲛⲁ,[413] ⲙⲓⲛⲉ,[414] ⲙⲏⲛⲁ.[415] This last writing is the most familiar for this name; ⲙⲏⲛⲁⲥ[416] is a rare writing for it. The name is still used until now.

ⲁⲡⲁ ⲙⲓⲛⲁ: It is not clear who apa Mena is in this letter because there are hundreds of apas called Mena throughout the history of Christianity in Egypt, but the most well-known is apa Mena in the Mariut.[417]

ϫⲉⲓⲁ: This is ϫⲉ ⲉⲓⲛⲁ: ⲉ of ϫⲉ is often omitted if it is followed by a verbal prefix beginning with a vowel, in particular in present II and future II – such as our text –, or the future negative ⲛⲛⲉ.[418] In non-literary texts, this is very familiar in the late period.[419]

ⲉⲓⲛⲁ: This is the auxiliary verb of the second future.[420] It should be noted that the second future is the second present with particle ⲛⲁ and infinitive.[421] ⲛ of the

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408 Aziz. S. Atiya, 'Apa', *Copt. Ency.* I, 152.

409 T. Derda & E.Wipszycka, 'L'Emploi des Titres ABBA, APA et PAPAS dans L'Egypte Byzantine', *JJP* XXIV (1994), 25.

410 Nikolaos Gonis, 'Abū and Apa. Arab onomastics in Egyptian context', *JJP* XXXI (2001), 47.

411 Heuser, *Die Personennamen der Kopten*, 14.

412 Satzinger, *Koptische Urkunden* III, Heft I, 64.

413 Stefanski & Lichtheim, *Coptic Ostraca from Medinet Habu* (1952), pap. 358.

414 Till, *Die Koptischen Rechtsurkunden*, 76 (pap. 79).

415 Till, *Die Koptischen Ostraka der Papyrussammlung*, 26 (pap. 93).

416 Crum, *Coptic Ostraca*, pap. 39.

417 J. Drescher, *Apa Mena, A selection of Coptic texts relating to saint Menas* (Cairo, 1946), xi.

418 Kahle, *Bala'izah* II, 179.

419 Kahle, *Bala'izah* II, 179.

420 Till, *Koptische Grammatik*, 240.

421 Till, *Koptische Grammatik*, 155.

second future is omitted;[422] ⲛ is also omitted in certain verbal prefixes of the first future,[423] the future relative,[424] the second perfect, the past relative,[425] and the first perfect negative.[426]

ϫⲟⲩⲧ: This is the Fayoumic form for the verb ϫⲟⲟⲩ 'to send'; the object of this form should be a suffix (ϫⲟⲩⲧ /).[427]

L. 5

] . ⲁ̣ⲓⲙⲁ ⲁⲓⲧ ⲛⲉ̣ϩⲙⲉⲧ ⲉⲡϫⲱⲙⲉ |

ⲁⲓⲧ ⲛⲉ̣ϩⲙⲉⲧ: The first perfect tense; ⲁ-, ⲁ / is the auxiliary verb of the first perfect,[428] ⲧ is simply the infinitive ϯ 'give, pay' and related meanings.[429] The syllabic ϯ seems to have been used in the Coptic period, whether it would be used as? a monogram of ⲧ and ⲓ, or ⲧⲓ 'give'; hence it was added to the alphabet as last letter.[430] ⲓ is omitted in a number of literary and non-literary texts.[431]

ϩⲙⲉⲧ: is ϩⲟⲙⲛⲧ, ϩⲟⲙⲉⲧ 'coper, bronze';[432] when it is used together with the verb ϯ it means 'give, pay money'.[433] ⲛ is sometimes added before ⲧ to mark a sonant pronunciation in ⲙⲛⲧ, ϣⲟⲙⲛⲧ, ϩⲟⲙⲛⲧ. This has become part of the language proper, especially in Sahidic.[434] On the other hand, in the other dialects it is often omitted and there are a number of Sahidic and semi-Sahidic manuscripts where ⲛ is frequently omitted, especially in ϣⲟⲙⲛⲧ, ϩⲟⲙⲛⲧ, and sometimes in ⲙⲛⲧ.[435]

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422 Kahle, *Bala'izah* II, 152.

423 Kahle, *Bala'izah* II, 151.

424 Kahle, *Bala'izah* II, 158.

425 Kahle, *Bala'izah* II, 158.

426 Kahle, *Bala'izah* II, 159.

427 Crum, *Dict.*, 793a.

428 Till, *Koptische Grammatik*, 159.

429 Crum., *Dict.*, 392a.

430 W.E. Crum, 'An Egyptian text in Greek characters', *JEA* 28 (1942), 20.

431 Kahle, *Bala'izah* II, 62-77.

432 Crum, *Dict.*, 678a.

433 Crum, *Dict.*, 678a.

434 Kahle, *Bala'izah* II, 103.

435 Kahle, *Bala'izah* II, 105.

(III) Pap. 3376
(Plate IX)

Manuscript No.	3367, Coptic Museum, Old Cairo, Egypt
Material	Papyrus; its colours are dark yellow and it has some holes in the its edges
Dialect	Sahidic
Dimensions	18.5 x 13.0 cm. The papyrus is in a very bad condition.
Provenance	Unknown. The Museum purchased it from al-sheikh Mahmoud Ali from Al-Bahansa, on 9/2/1937[436]
Date	6th or 7th century. The date is not mentioned in the text, but we can suggest this date according to the palaeography of its script.[437]
Script	Per folio recto 16. It is very good literary handwriting.
Content	Letter



Papyrus no. 3376

Text

1) ⳨ ⲉⲡⲓⲇ̣[ⲏ] ⲁⲓⲡⲁⲣⲕⲁⲗⲉ ⲧⲉⲕⲙⲉⲧⲓⲱ̣[ⲧ

2) ⲁⲕϫⲟ̣ⲟⲥ ϫⲉ ⲁⲙⲟⲩ ⲉⲣⲉⲥ ⲙⲧⲁⲛ [ⲙⲙⲟⲕ

436 According to the registers of the Coptic Museum.

437 H. Hyvernat, *Album de palaeographie copte* (Osnabrück, 1972), 11.

3) ⲦⲈⲔⲀⲄⲀⲠⲎ ⲤⲞⲞⲨⲚ̄ ϪⲈ ⲚⲦⲞ |

4) . . . .|ⲰⲦ ⲞⲚ ⲀⲚ̣ ⲠⲈⲤⲔⲀⲚⲦ̣[ⲀⲖⲞⲚ

5) Ⲡ̣ϤⲈⲔⲎ ⲘⲠⲀⲦⲈϢⲚⲎ ⲚϨⲈ . [

6) ⲀⲂⲰⲖ ⲠⲔ·Ⲁ·ⲢⲠⲞⲤ ⲘϤⲔⲀⲦⲈϢ|ⲚⲎ

7) ⲞⲨⲚⲈⲢⲦⲞϤ ⲚⲤⲞⲨⲞ ⲚϨⲰϤ̣ Ⲓ̣̈|

8) ⲚⲀⲒ: ⲀⲨⲂⲒⲦⲞ̣Ⲩ [ⲚⲤ]ⲞⲨ Ⲓ Ⲛ[

9) . . . |. ⲀⲔⲰⲦϤ . . Ⲉ ⲚϨⲞⲨⲚ̣ [

10). . . | Ⲛ̣ⲖⲀϨⲈ ⲚϨⲈ . . ⲈϨⲞⲨⲚ : Ⲙ[

11) . . .]Ⲧ̣Ⲉ· ⲈⲒ̈ⲀϢⲦⲀ̣ . . ⲞⲨϬⲞⲖ̣/Ⲙ̣ [

12) Ⲉ. . Ⲉ ⲚⲦⲞⲔ ⲈⲦⲞ Ⲛ̄ϪⲞⲈⲒⲤ : Ⲉ. |

13) ⲞⲨⲔⲞ̣ⲨⲒ̈ Ⲛ̄ϬⲀⲖϨⲦ ⲚϨⲞⲘⲦ Ⲛ̄Ⲧ [

14) ⲞⲞⲨ ϮⲠⲀⲢⲀⲔⲖⲈ ⲦⲈⲔⲘⲈⲦ[ⲒⲰ̣Ⲧ

15) Ⲁ̣ϨⲰ̣. ϪⲈ̣ . . . ϨⲘ ⲠϢⲎⲘ Ⲙ̄ |

Apparatus:

1-14 ⲠⲀⲢⲀⲔⲀⲖⲈⲒ, ⲚⲦⲈⲔ

Translation

1) Whereas I asked your fatherhood

2) You said it: come to the south and have a rest

3) May your love know that

4) The scandal

5) The wage of my Gardener

6) The fruit

7) An artab of grain

8) Loom: they fetched them in day 10 of (month x)

10)

11)

11)

12) You who are the lord: come

13)

14) Today, I ask your fatherhood

15) small

Commentary

The papyrus is in a very bad condition; it is badly restored. It is easy to find a small part from another papyrus and use it to find the fourth line, since the writing in this part of the script is vertically.[438]

The letter concerns an agricultural matter and it deals with some agricultural productions. The exact meaning is not clear because a large part of the papyrus is lacking.

L. 1

⳨ ⲉⲡⲓⲇ|ⲏ| ⲁⲓⲡⲁⲣⲕⲁⲗⲉ ⲧⲉⲕⲙⲉⲧⲓⲱ|ⲧ

⳨ Sign of the cross, it is the symbolic sign of the crucifixion. The writings of the church fathers and the oldest liturgies clearly indicate the use of the sign of the cross as an integral part of the service or the sacrament.[439] The Coptic writers used to put this sign at the beginning and at the end of the texts.

ⲉⲡⲓⲇ(ⲏ): ἐπειδή is a Greek word which means 'where, after, that, when, since'.[440] In Coptic texts it has many writings and it is used for introducing the real contents.[441] In Coptic texts this word ends with **ⲉ** or **ⲏ**;[442] apparently the scribe made a mistake and forgot this letter.

438 I wanted to try to take this part off, hoping maybe I could recognize some letters under it, but I could not do it because of the bureaucracy of the administration. Dr. Charles Hedrick and I then used the infra-red in this part, to try to see anything under it, but we could not recognize anything.

439 Archbishop Basilios, 'Sign of the Cross', *Copt. Ency.* II (1991), 658.

440 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 613.

441 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen Texte*, 275.

442 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen Texte*, 275.

ⲁⲓⲡⲁⲣⲕⲁⲗⲉ: First perfect tense;[443] ⲡⲁⲣⲕⲁⲗⲉ (παρακαλὲώ is a Greek verb, which means 'ask for'.[444] This verb is widespread in Coptic texts and therefore it has many writings.[445]

ⲧⲉⲕⲙⲉⲧⲓⲱⲧ: ⲙⲉⲧ- BF (ⲙⲛⲧ- SAA2, ⲘⲈⲚⲦ- O) is prefix to nouns or adjectives forming abstracts;[446] ⲛ is regularly added in Sahidic before ⲧ in ⲙⲛⲧ, in the other dialects it is often omitted.[447]

L. 2

ⲁⲕϫⲟ̣ⲟⲥ ϫⲉ ⲁⲙⲟⲩ ⲉⲣⲉⲥ ⲙⲧⲁⲛ ⲓⲙⲙⲟⲕ

ⲁⲕϫⲟ̣ⲟⲥ: First perfect tense;[448] ϫⲟ̣ⲟⲥ from infinitive ϫⲱ 'say, tell, speak'(this verb has many various forms with nouns and pronouns),[449] plus 3rd sing. fem. suffix pronoun.; ϪⲈ conjunction (from ϫⲱ 'say').[450]

After the most common verb of speaking, ϫⲱ 'say', reported discourse must be expressed as a formal direct object, ⲥ / ⲙ̄ⲙⲟ=ⲥ with second object in the form of a ϫⲉ clause, which contains the actual content of discourse.[451]

ⲁⲙⲟⲩ: 2nd sing. m.,[452] imperative of ⲉⲓ 'come', often when several persons are addressed.[453] ⲁⲙⲟⲩ is one of ten verb lexemes forming special affirmative imperatives,[454] mostly beginning in ⲁ- instead of an infinitiv imperative.[455]

443 Till, *Koptische Grammatik*, 159.

444 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 1311.

445 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen Texte*, 615.

446 Crum, *Dict.*,176a.

447 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 105.

448 Till, *Koptische Grammatik*, 159.

449 Crum, *Dict.*, 754a.

450 Crum, *Dict.*, 756a.

451 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 424.

452 ⲁⲙⲟⲩ (said to one male); ⲁⲙⲏ (said to one female); ⲁⲙⲏⲓⲧⲛ̄ var. ⲁⲙⲏⲉⲓⲛ (said to several addressees).

453 Crum, *Dict.*, 7b.

454 ⲁⲗⲟ / reflex. 'cease' (ⲗⲟ); ⲁⲙⲟⲩ 'come' (ⲉⲓ); ⲁⲛⲓⲛⲉ 'bring' (ⲉⲓⲛⲉ); ⲁⲛⲁⲩ 'look' (ⲛⲁⲩ); ⲁⲣⲓⲣⲉ 'do' (ⲉⲓⲣⲉ); ⲁⲩ 'hand over'; ⲁⲟⲩⲱⲛ 'open' (ⲟⲩⲱⲛ); ⲁϫⲓ 'say' (ϫⲱ); ⲙⲁ 'give' (ϯ); ⲙⲟ 'take away'.

455 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 292.

ϵⲣⲉⲥ: ⲣⲏⲥ ⲛⲛ ⲙ, 'south, places in the south';[456] in early texts we frequently find ⲉ instead of ⲏ[457] and also ⲏ instead of ⲉ,[458] simply because ĕ is expressed by ⲉ and ⲏ. This usually occurs in some early documents before ⲛ, ⲙ, and also ⲣ, ⲥ and ϩ.[459]

L. 3

ⲧⲉⲕⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ ⲥⲟⲟⲩⲛ̄ ϫⲉ ⲛⲧⲟ |

ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ: ἀγάπη, a Greek word which means 'love'.[460] In Coptic texts it has many writings, such as: ⲁⲁⲡⲏ, ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲉ, ⲁⲅⲏ, ⲁⲕⲁⲡⲏ, ⲁϭⲁⲡⲏ. The Coptic equivalent is ⲛⲁ (ⲁⲣⲓ ⲡⲛⲁ).[461] In literary and non-literary texts we sometimes find ⲕ instead of ⲅ, but it is frequently written in Greek words;[462] ϭ instead of ⲅ is found as well.[463]

L. 4

. . . .]ⲱⲧ ⲟⲛ ⲁⲛ̣ ⲡⲉⲥⲕⲁⲛⲧ̣[ⲁⲗⲟⲛ

ϣⲧⲁⲛⲇⲁⲗⲟⲛⲉ: σκάνδαλον, a Greek word which means 'scandal, offence'.[464] In Coptic, two ways of writing occur for this, ⲥⲕⲁⲛⲇⲁⲗⲟⲛ and ⲥⲕⲁⲛⲧⲁⲗⲟⲛ.[465] We frequently find ⲧ instead of ⲇ in Greek words.[466]

L. 5

ⲡ̣ϥⲉⲕⲏ ⲙⲡⲁⲧⲉϣⲛⲏ ⲛϩⲉ.[

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456 Crum, *Dict.*, 299b.

457 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 75.

458 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 70.

459 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 54.

460 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 6.

461 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen*, 3.

462 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 94.

463 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 95.

464 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 1604.

465 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen*, 733.

466 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, p. 95.

ϥⲉⲕⲏ = ⲃⲉⲕⲉ SAA² nn m, 'wage'.[467] ϥ instead of ⲃ occurs in examples from early literary and magical texts; in non-literary texts this is common.[468] And ⲏ= ⲉ, as in ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ.

ⲡⲁⲧⲉϣⲛⲏ: ⲡⲁ- is a possessive pronoun ('the one related to...' = (NN)'s, mine, yours, etc.). The possessive pronoun expresses a general, logical, ambiguous relationship (related to, belonging to), exactly like the mark of the relationship ⲛ.[469] ⲧⲉϣⲛⲏ = 'the garden'.[470]

L. 6

ⲁⲃⲱⲗ ⲡⲕ·ⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ ⲙϥⲕⲁⲧⲉϣⲓⲛⲏ

ⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ: καρπὸς, a Greek word which means 'fruit'.[471] In Coptic it has writings such as: ⲅⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ, ⲕⲁⲣⲡ, ⲕⲁⲣⲡ, ⲕⲁⲣⲡⲱⲥ.[472] Sometimes it is used as a compound verb with ϯ- ϯⲕⲁⲣⲡⲟⲥ 'to produce fruit'.[473] In general some Greek nouns are used as a verb.

L. 7

ⲟⲩⲛⲉⲣⲧⲟϥ ⲛⲥⲟⲩⲟ ⲛϩⲱϥ ⲓ̈ⲓ

ⲟⲩⲛⲉⲣⲧⲟϥ: ⲟⲩⲁ S, ⲟⲩⲉ S^f AA²F, ⲟⲩⲓ B, 'one'.[474] 'one...' is normally expressed by the prefix ⲟⲩ-. Very rare is the specified phrase ⲟⲩⲁ ⲛ-.[475] Sahidic writes the numbers in full, and it only rarely uses the system founded on the Greek model, in which the letters of the alphabet have a numerical value. In Bohairic the Greek system is extensively used.[476] The numerical affixes are suffixed to a noun, and the noun motivates the gender of the compound.[477]

467 Crum, *Dict.*, 30b.

468 Kahle, *Bala'izah* I, 93-94.

469 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 46.

470 Crum, *Dict.*, 572a.

471 Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 879.

472 Förster, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in den Koptischen dokumentarischen*, 380.

473 Lambdin, *Introduction to Sahidic Coptic*, 110.

474 Crum, *Dict.*, 469a.

475 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 60.

476 Plumley, *An Introductory Coptic Grammar*, 48.

477 Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 61.

ⲉⲣⲧⲟϥ, ⲣⲧⲟⲃ nn m, measure of grain (اردب).[478] It has many writings in Coptic texts, such as: **ⲣⲧⲟϥ, ⲉⲣⲧⲟϥ, ⲣⲧⲁⲃ, ⲁⲣⲧⲟⲃ, ⲉⲣⲧⲁⲡ**. In Greek it is αρτάβη.[479] It is common in Coptic texts to find the abbreviation of this word ⲁⲣᵀ. The number always comes after it .[480] Until now this measure unit is still use in our villages.

L. 8

ⲚⲀⲒ· ⲀⲨⲂⲒⲦⲞⲨ]ⲚⲤ]ⲞⲨ Ⲓ Ⲛ[

The line seems to be as a date for bringing something. The date starts with day, month and then there should be season or year. This dating is different from the other dating used in Egypt at this period, which was called indiction year.

478 Crum, *Dict.*, 305b.

479 Crum, *Dict.*, 305b.

480 M.R. Hasitzka, 'Koptische texte', *Corpus Papyrorum Raineri* 12 (1987), 76-77.

Conclusion

By the end of this study, under the title 'Coptic Texts Relating to Daily Life', the most important point that should be focused on is that some new Coptic papyri texts have come to light. The main work I did was reading, translating and making notes, especially dialectical comments on these texts. The text and the translation might be a useful source for other scholars in their research.

While reading and translating the texts, I have made some important notes:

- Ancient Egyptian civilization did not end with Ancient Egypt (Pharaonic Egypt). The Egyptians continued to develop their country in various fields, among which linguistic, spiritual, religious, scientific and artistic, although a new religion was later endorsed.
- Coptic should more correctly be used to refer to the script – the ancient Egyptian language had four scripts: Hieroglyphic, Hieratic, Demotic and Coptic – rather than to the language itself. This script was introduced as far back as the second century B.C. and was applied to the writing of the Egyptian language from the first century C.E. It was spoken for nearly a thousand years thereafter.
- It is still extremely difficult to localize the Coptic dialects because Coptic has been a dead language for a long time and Coptology is still far from having reached any certainty concerning all points of its dialectical geography. Dialect variation is the result of numerous spontaneous changes that have sprung up in limited areas. The Coptic language reflects the old Egyptian local dialects, but the natural homes of their dialects are a matter of abstract scholarly calculation, as a result of the absence of objective geographical evidence.
- Generally, in language, the relationship of phonemes, sounds and letters is notoriously inconsistent, arbitrary and hard to predict. So it should be no surprise that in Coptic the sounds and their articulation can only be vaguely reconstructed from written texts alone.
- The Coptic papyri (manuscripts) are a very important source for the illustration of the daily life, culture, religion, habits and amusement of the people in that time.

- The Coptic private letter is probably the most numerous type of Coptic texts that has remained. These letters are not only valuable for what they reveal of the daily life in those days, but also for what they tell us about the non-literary Coptic idiom. Generally the non-literary texts help us to correct the picture of ancient Egypt and are our primary and most rewarding source for the understanding of the Coptic language. Letter writing was much practiced and there are quantities of letters between persons of all degrees of education and written on all sorts of occasions.
- The non-literary texts give us a full picture of Christianity as it was lived, better than the one presented by the historical, hagiographical or homiletic texts.
- Palaeography was used to date some texts that were not dated by the author. But it may be fairly said that Coptic palaeography dating Coptic manuscripts according to the form of the script does not yet exist.
- Expressions for the writing of letters reflect the situation in which the writer dictated the letter to the scribe. Thus, in addressing the recipient, the verb 'Say' commonly appears at the beginning of communications.
- Either the recipient was named at the beginning of the letter, indicating the address, or simply the letter carrier was ordered to deliver the letter to a particular individual 'personally' (no. 3376, no. 2677). Sometimes a reply to the letter was given to anyone who happened to be going in the direction of the recipient (no. 4057). The address was always put in the verso of the papyrus.
- The Greek verbs, 'Graeco-Coptic verbs', for example ⲁⲥⲡⲁⲍⲉ, ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲕⲁⲗⲉ, ⲡⲣⲉⲡⲉⲓ are immutable, occurring only in an absolute state of the Coptic infinitive; they have no stative form.
- It is noticeable that the vowels in the private Coptic letters are capable to replace each other, like ⲏ, ⲉ and ⲟ, ⲱ.
- The Coptic letters used the normal way of making abbreviations – the definite article followed by the first and the final letters of the name, after this the supralinear stroke, drawn as an abbreviation mark.
- Referring to the studied texts, it should be noted that when Christianity was introduced to Egypt, a great many Greek names like (ⲅⲉⲱⲣⲅⲉ, ⲁⲡⲟⲗⲗⲱ) were adopted and even a greater number of Biblical ones like

(CAMOYHλ). Therefore it can be said that Coptic proper names are partly taken over from ancient Egyptian, Greek, Arabic and partly created out of current Coptic word stock.

- Sometimes the text in the middle of a letter on papyrus is vanished partly (for example no. 4057) because a papyrus letter should be tied with a knot and the carrier would touch this part of the letter while carrying it.
- It is very interesting to find out that papyrus no. 4057 belongs to the Coptic archive of Dioscorus of Aphrodito, since the Coptic portion of this archive still remains unknown.
- The archive of Dioscorus is a rich source of information about the cultural and economic life of late antique Egypt. Dioscorus' Coptic archive gives us the fullest picture of the life in Coptic Egypt at the time of its highest cultural flowering.
- The Moslem scribes put the sign '𝒥' or the sign '//' instead of the cross '†'sign at the beginning and in the address of Coptic letters.
- When the writer of the Coptic letter wanted to make a powerful opening, he used to write an introduction formula with an oath (4057) CA TANACTACIC NTTE, PICTOC.
- In text no. 4057 the Greek word mageiroc 'butcher' appears for the first time in Coptic texts, therefore Hans Förster could not mention this word in his book about the Greek words in Coptic texts.
- In non-literary texts the omission, addition or metathesis of some letters is a well-known phenomenon.

Omission:

for example of the letter 'n', in the first future, the second future, and the relative prefix; of the letter H, in the words ϢHAI and NHϢB; and of the letter Є, which in the word ϪЄ is often omitted when followed by a verbal prefix beginning with a vowel.

Addition:

The letter H: it is common to add the letter H to the word ϪЄ and ЄIA.

Metathesis:

Between M and N in the word NIM.

- One of the most important findings in text no. 4057, is that the address is written in Greek (the body of the letter is written in Coptic and the address in Greek). The reason for this might be that several languages were in common use in the society at this moment, so one might expect to find translating, interpreting and quoting to be important activities or one might expect that the author (scribe) was used to write Greek addresses in letters, or the carrier of the letter was used to reading them, or the Greek formulas of addresses were the familiar ones. The relationship between Greek and Coptic is a complex matter.
- The sign '⳨' in Greek and Coptic addresses stands for concernment in the space in the middle where the tape crossed, or to fill up the space to be occupied by cord and seal.
- In Coptic texts, the Greek word 'τόπος', in Coptic 'ⲧⲟⲡⲟⲥ', has many meanings: 'place, region, monastery, shrine, church'. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult in Coptic texts to distinguish one church from another in the same place because each one is simply called 'ⲧⲟⲡⲟⲥ'.

List of abbreviations

AE	Ancient Egypt, London, New York, 1934 ff
Archiv	Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete, Berlin
ASAE	Annales du Service des Antiquités de L'Egypte, le Caire, 1900 ff
ASKÄ	Arbeiten zum Spatantiken und Koptischen Ägypten
Bala'izah	Paul E. Kahle, Bala'izah. Coptic texts from Deir el-Bala'izah in Upper Egypt, I-II, London, 1954
BASP	Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists, Urbana, 1963 ff
BIFAO	Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, le Caire
BSAC	Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte, le Caire, 1935 ff
CASAE	Cahier. Supplements aux A.S.A.E., le Caire = S.A.S.A.E.
CdÉ	Chronique d'Egypte: Bulletin périodique de la Fondation égyptologique Reine Elisabeth, Brussel, 1925 ff
Copt. Ency.	A.S.Atiya, ed., The Coptic Encyclopedia, 8 vols., New York, 1991
Crum, Dict.	W.E. Crum, A Coptic Dictionary, Oxford, 1939
Enchoria	Enchoria: Zeitschrift für Demotistik und Koptologie, Wiesbaden, 1971 ff
Ency.E.C.	Encyclopedia of Eastern Christianity, London, 1990
Études Copt.	Etudes Coptes en Cahiers de la Bibliothéque Copte
Heuser, P.N.	Gustav Heuser, Die Personennamen der Kopten, Leipzig, 1929
JCS	Journal of Coptic Studies
JEA	Journal of Egyptian Archaeology, London, 1914 ff
JJP	Journal of Juristic Papyrology, Warsaw, 1964 ff
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
LÄ	Lexikon der Ägyptologie, Wiesbaden, 1975 ff

Layton, C.G.	Bentley Layton, A Coptic Grammar, Wiesbaden, 2000
Liddell&Scott, GEL	H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, Oxford, 1968
Le Muséon	Le Muséon. Revue d'études orientales, Louvain, 1882 ff
OEAE	The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt, I-III, Cairo, 2000
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, Löwen
OLP	Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica, Löwen
OMRO	Oudheidkundige Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden, Leiden
P. Cairo Masp.	J. Maspero, Papyrus grecs d'époque Byzantine, Cairo 1911 (Catalogue génerál des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire)
P. Lond.	H. I. Bell, Greek Papyri in the British Museum. Catalogue, with texts, London, 1924
SAOC	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization, Chicago, 1931 ff
Till, KGSD	W. Till, Koptische Grammatik Saidischer Dialekt, Leipzig, 1970
ZÄS	Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde, Leipzig / Berlin, 1863 ff

Note on Editorial Procedure

Texts in this work are presented according to the usual papyrological practices. The following signs have these meanings:

( ) Resolution of abbreviation or symbol

[ ] Lacuna in the papyrus (also used [ ] in translation)

[ca. 7] Approximate number of letters lost in a lacuna and not restored

[[ ]] Letters written, then deleted by the scribe

‘ ’ Letters omitted by the scribe

{ } Letters incorrectly written by the scribe

ⲁⲃⲅ Letters later inserted by the scribe above the line and not intended to indicate an abbreviation

ⲁⲃⲅ Letters, the reading of which is uncertain or would be uncertain outside of the context

. . . Letters which have not been read[481]

481 K.A.Worp, *Greek papyri from Kellis* I (Leiden, 1995), vii; A. Grohmann, *The Arabic papyri* I, (Cairo, 1934), 7.

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